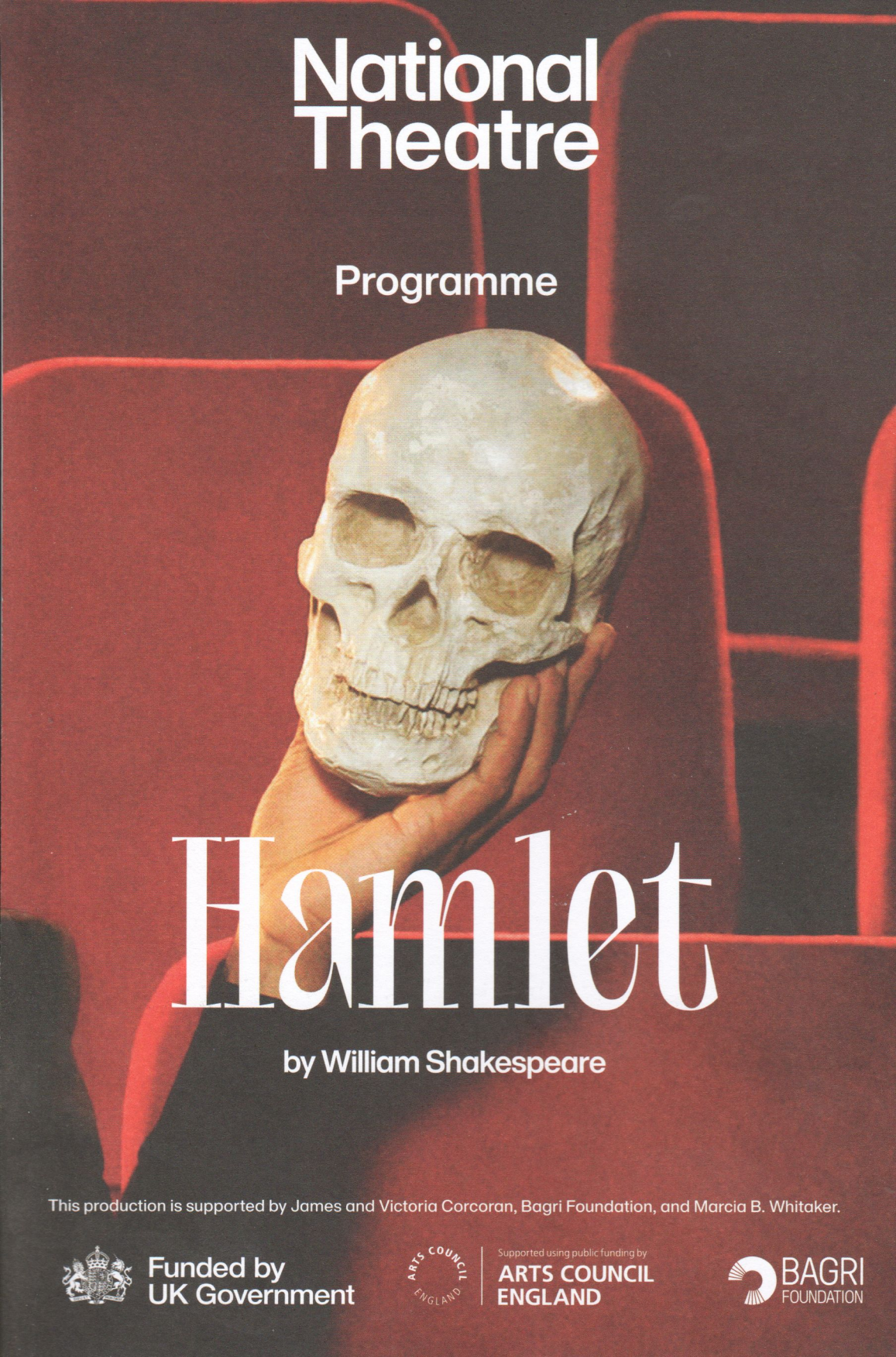
National Theatre

Programme



Hamlet

by William Shakespeare

This production is supported by James and Victoria Corcoran, Bagri Foundation, and Marcia B. Whitaker.

Funded by UK Government

Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

BAGRI FOUNDATION

RSC

LONDON
2025 SEASON

21 OCT 2025 - 17 JAN 2026

'SPECTACULAR'
THE GUARDIAN

'SPELLBINDING'
THE STAGE

Concept by Émilie Chen, photography by Rachel Louise Brown.

Concept by RSC, photography by Seamus Ryan.

WENDY & PETER PAN

BY ELLA HICKSON
ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK BY J.M. BARRIE

TWELFTH NIGHT

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

BOOK NOW

barbican

TikTok | £10 TICKETS FOR 16-25s

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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

National Theatre

Hello and welcome to your National Theatre.

This autumn, we are thrilled to bring you a season filled with inspiring performances, exciting new work, and bold storytelling.

Whether you're joining us on the South Bank, enjoying one of our shows in the West End or on tour around the country, watching a production in cinema or from home through National Theatre at Home, there's something to inspire and entertain everyone.

At the National Theatre, we're dedicated to nurturing and celebrating the theatre-makers of tomorrow. In the following pages, we're excited to be spotlighting one of our brilliant apprentices, Sarah Ray-Dobson, who shares her experience working in our Props department. And we present the 2025 Linbury Prize for Stage Design, which provides a unique platform for the next generation of designers, helping to shape the future of theatre with bold new visions.

Enjoy exploring everything that's coming up.

Indhu Rubasingham and Kate Varah
Director, Executive Director and Co-Chief Executives

Everyone is welcome.

We are all part of making the National Theatre a welcoming, inspiring place where everyone can feel they belong, whatever the purpose of their visit.

Discriminatory and intimidating behaviour have no place here.

If you experience any, we'll take action. Speak to any member of staff who can refer you to a manager. We're here to be proactive and to help.

We take pride in acting with care and compassion, and everyone who visits or works here is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect.

This place exists to spark creativity, conversation and thought, although please don't assume that other visitors and staff will necessarily agree with your point of view.

Please be open, patient, and kind.

Discover Autun

Enjoy autumn with the National Theatre

DISCOVER: OUR SHOWS

Ballet Shoes returns from November.

On stage

This autumn on our South Bank stages, you can enjoy world premieres, the return of a family favourite and new productions of classic plays.

In the Olivier, Nima Taleghani's version of *Bacchae* plays until 1 November, breathing new life into Euripides' ultimate tragedy through rhythm, movement and music. From 17 November, you can once more enjoy Kendall Feaver's version of Noel Streatfeild's *Ballet Shoes*. In this family show, three adopted sisters learn who they are and what they want to be – plus a dance or two along the way.

Classics are given new energy in the Lyttelton, too. The National Theatre's Deputy Artistic Director, Robert Hastie, directs Hiran Abeysekera as Hamlet in this stylish and darkly funny reimagining of Shakespeare's tragedy, playing until 22 November. In December, Irish classic *The Playboy of the Western World* opens. Directed by Caitríona McLaughlin, John Millington Synge's story of youth and self-discovery has a cast that includes Nicola Coughlan as Margaret, Siobhán McSweeney as Widow Quin and Éanna Hardwicke as Christopher Mahon.

And there are two world premieres in the Dorfman. David Lan's brand-new play, *The Land of the Living*, plays until 1 November. Directed by Stephen Daldry, *The Land of the*

October–December 2025 at the National Theatre

The Playboy of the Western World plays from December.

Living is immersed in the shape-shifting nature of memory and morality. *End*, the concluding part of David Eldridge's trilogy exploring love and relationships, has its world premiere in November. Clive Owen and Saskia Reeves play Alfie and Julie in this touching and funny play of a life well lived.

There are also some special one-off events taking place in the Olivier this autumn. On 23 October, rapper, singer and songwriter Wretch 32 headlines a one-night-only performance of his critically acclaimed album, *Home?* reimagined through the power of theatre. This unforgettable live set will feature special guests. And on 19 December, theatrical greats Judi Dench and Ian McKellen will be in conversation with fellow actor and friend Jim Carter. Both one-off events are sold out, but any returns will be sold via the National Theatre's website.

Wretch 32 plays a one-off gig in the Olivier in October

In the West End and on tour

Our critically acclaimed production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, in a co-production with Sonia Friedman Productions, plays in the West End. This joyful and flamboyant reimagining of Oscar Wilde's celebrated comedy plays at the Noël Coward until 10 January 2026, with a cast that includes Olly Alexander, Nathan Stewart-Jarrett, Hugh Dennis, Shobna Gulati, Kitty Hawthorne, Jessica Whitehurst, Hayley Carmichael and Stephen Fry.

Hadestown continues at the Lyric, West End. Inspired by Greek myth, the cast of Anaïs Mitchell's award-winning musical will include Nicola Roberts as Persephone until 18 January 2026.

And our award-winning production of *Dear England* continues a national tour, taking in venues from Southampton to Liverpool. Cast includes David Sturzaker as Gareth Southgate and Samantha Womack as Pippa Grange.

>>

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Up next:

Inter Alia, in cinemas now

Mrs. Warren's Profession, in cinemas from 23 October

The Fifth Step, in cinemas from 27 November

Hamlet, in cinemas from 22 January

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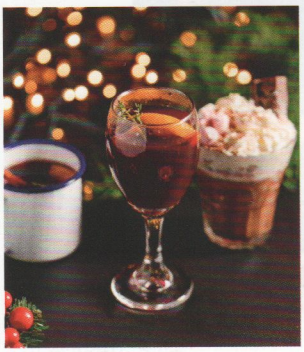
Food and drink

This season, make your visit to the South Bank a little more special. Sip seasonal drinks on the terrace at Forza Wine, or toast the night with expertly crafted coffee and cocktails at Grind. Gather for a pre-show feast at Lasdun, or drop in during the interval to catch live jazz (Thursdays and Fridays). For a more relaxed celebration, The Understudy offers craft beers, seasonal street food specials and riverside views.



Food and drink at the National Theatre

Visit our website to find out more about what's happening at the National Theatre **nationaltheatre.org.uk**

See things differently

Experience the magic of theatre beyond the stage. Our backstage tours offer a unique chance to explore the world-renowned National Theatre from a new perspective. In addition to our classic tour, we also offer a variety of specialised tours that delve into the fascinating stories behind our productions and building. Whether you are a family looking for adventure, a history buff, or a fan of architecture, there's a tour for everyone.

Step into the world of *Ballet Shoes* on our special family tour and see how the beloved book comes to life on stage. This 60-minute family tour follows the Fossil sisters as they pursue their aspirations, both on stage and off. This tour is designed for families with children aged 7+.

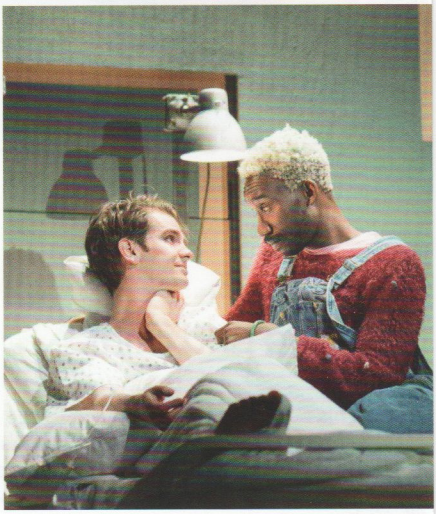
Or discover the ground-breaking LGBTQ+ plays that dared to bring queer characters and themes into the spotlight in a special tour that focuses on queer theatre history. Celebrate the achievements and contributions of iconic queer artists at the National Theatre and beyond, as well as how their work illuminates the challenges faced during decades of hostility and repression.

Concrete lovers can delve into the architecture of our iconic South Bank building on our architecture tour. The tour is ideal for anyone with an interest in design, London history, 20th-century architecture and Brutalist buildings.

To find out more about guided tours at the National Theatre, visit nationaltheatre.org.uk/your-visit/things-to-do/theatre-tours/

Dear England on tour. Image: Marc Brenner

Unwrap the magic of National Theatre at Home



Angels in America: Millennium Approaches
Image by Helen Maybanks

STREAM: THEATRE TO YOUR LIVING ROOM

Launched five years ago with only 11 titles, National Theatre at Home now has over 100 productions available to stream worldwide and new shows are added every month. Last year, 31 million minutes of theatre were streamed via the platform, and people in 184 countries experienced a production via National Theatre at Home. 95 per cent of National Theatre at home productions are available with audio description and all shows have optional captioning.

Current productions available to stream include ones from the Bridge Theatre, Kiln, Leeds Playhouse, Playful Productions, Chichester Festival Theatre, Young Vic, Bill Kenwright Ltd and Sonia Friedman Productions. And some of the highest streaming shows, including *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* and *Present Laughter*, are available worldwide.

Present Laughter
Image by Manuel Harlan

Life of Pi image by Johan Persson

Last-minute gifting?
Put your loved ones centre-stage with the ultimate gift for theatre-lovers – gift from one month to a year of streamed theatre for as little as £9.99.

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Find out more at :
nationaltheatre.org.uk /membership

Or scan the QR code

Meet the Theatre-Maker: Props

SKILLS: APPRENTICESHIPS

The National Theatre Skills Centre, in partnership with Bank of America, offers resources, training and professional development opportunities.

As November is Discover! Creative Careers month, our apprentice prop-maker Sarah Ray-Dobson shares what it's been like to work and study with the National Theatre.

Sarah Ray-Dobson in the Props workshop. Image: Cameron Slater Photography

How long have you been an apprentice?

Exactly a year. I found out about it on the government website. I hadn't thought about a career in theatre, and I was just job hunting on the government jobs board.

What did you have to do to get the apprenticeship?

I had an interview and in the interview there were some practical tasks. I had to make a half-lap joint, some carpentry stuff, some sort of box and I had to do a kind of technical drawing. And then I had my interview and they asked me normal job questions. It was very conversational. I already had making experience, but not carpentry specifically. I had a basic knowledge of wood and stuff, but I remember asking questions and it was very conversational.

What is your day-to-day like as an apprentice?

My college is in Nottingham – I think that's the only course they could find that was applicable to this job. Because it's there, I have a week at college every ten weeks – I can do weeks of work and then go to college and write up about it and there's a workshop there so I can practise anything I'm unsure of here, so they bounce off each other.

Sarah Ray-Dobson recently worked on the inside of the medical boxes used in *The Land of the Living*.

So are you coming to the end of your apprenticeship now?

Yeah, my contract here at the National Theatre is for two years, but my actual apprenticeship is one year. I have my assessment in October or November, so someone from a third party will come here for a day and look at what I am doing.

Why did you go for a props apprenticeship? Did you have much of an idea of what props meant at that stage?

Not really. I'd never thought about it as a thing I could do, even though it should have been quite clear. I was looking for something where I could make – and it was perfect for that.

My apprenticeship is a general furniture manufacturing apprenticeship. In my apprenticeship, the people who are with me on my course are in factories making the same type of furniture – like bed frames or something – but here it's a little bit different. There are people who have been teaching me a lot here at the National Theatre.

What was the first thing you can remember making here?

I think the first day I got here – there were a lot of people in and it was quite busy –they got me to paint cabbage leaves. I think I also helped someone paint some heads for *Coriolanus* – big Greek or Roman heads. So, it was more 'proppy' in my first few weeks, and then the first bit of furniture I made was a tall table.

And what are you making at the moment?

A coffin for *Hamlet*. I am told 'it's got to look like this' and someone will give me reference pictures or do me a drawing, or both. The coffin goes into a hole, so it has to be a certain shape and size.

The first stage as a furniture maker is you are given either a reference image or a drawing – and then what?

I make a cutting list out of the dimensions they give me and then go and cut my wood, get my materials ready. I have to look at the drawing for a long time to know that I fully understand it and that I have factored in certain dimensions. I'm not always confident with maths – and I know it's really simple stuff sometimes, but I triple check.

What is the thing you are proudest to have made?

I have a mini chest of drawers that's under my bench. It's like a bowed front with a nice veneer top. Mike [Garrett, Head of Prop Making] drew it up for me to hit some of the modules on my apprenticeship, but also just as a project. I quite like it. I've lined the inside of the drawers now and I'm going to take it home.

Do you find it creatively fulfilling?

Yes, definitely. And one of the other things I wanted was that I was learning, constantly learning things. In my previous job, it was good, I was making motorcycle helmets. I was there for two years so I knew how to do everything and it was same. But with being at the National Theatre, I get to learn and ask questions every day – it's not boring at all!

Did you know this was for furniture making up front? That's quite a difference to making motorcycle helmets.

Yes. It's funny, but it did help. And I have previous other experience painting and making, but my carpentry skills were really basic – I botched things, but now I can make things properly.

I feel like if you have any type of practical ability, or you enjoy making, an apprenticeship in prop-making at the National Theatre can be for you.

Inspire the next generation of theatre-makers and help train the workforce of tomorrow by supporting our Stories Start Here campaign. Visit nationaltheatre.org.uk/support

Find out more about what the Skill Centre offers: nationaltheatre.org.uk/learn-explore/skills-centre/

A scene from our Stories Start Here film showing our work with young people

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Modelbox for *Dreams Beyond the Shops*. Design by Jodie Jew Yates, from Linbury Prize exhibition 2023. Image © Ian Tillotson

By Design

CELEBRATE: THEATRE SKILLS

Model box for *Death of England; Death of England: Delroy*. Design and work in sketchbook by Yijing Chen from Linbury Prize exhibition 2023. Image © Ian Tillotson

Explore design with the National Theatre

From December, the Linbury Prize exhibition will once more be hosted at the National Theatre.

This biennial prize, celebrates and fosters the best in emerging stage designers, with recipients receiving a bursary along with an associate designer placement with an established designer. The prize has been running since 1987, with previous prize recipients including Es Devlin, Anthony Ward and Jon Bausor.

From the 140 submissions this year, the judges – designers Max Johns, Jean-Marc Puissant, Rajha Shakiry and Ian MacNeil – will select 12 people who will receive the Prize. Their submissions will also be exhibited in the Lyttelton Lounge at the National Theatre until June 2026.

And for younger would-be-designers, the Linbury Trust and the National Theatre will be piloting an Introduction to Stage Design course, aimed at 16–21-year-olds.

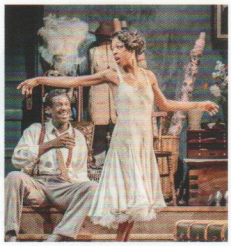
Through a series of weekly masterclasses, young people will have the opportunity to learn more about costume and stage design, before creating a final piece that will go on display in the Wolfson Gallery from April 2026.

To find out more about the Linbury Prize 2025 and the Introduction to Stage Design course, visit: nationaltheatre.org.uk/learn-explore/skills-centre/

Sketches for *Duchess of Malfi*. Design by Biz Sutton, from Linbury Prize exhibition 2023. Image © Ian Tillotson

Reaching classrooms

New plays join our streaming service for schools and two schools tours are announced

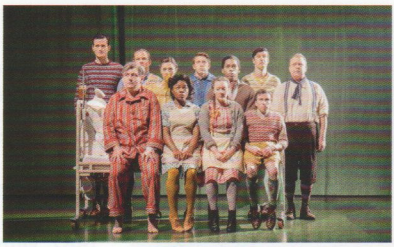


DISCOVER: OUR WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Seven new plays have joined our schools streaming service, National Theatre Collection, this autumn.

The newest productions to join the platform include *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Boy with Two Hearts*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky* and, from the Unicorn Theatre, *Pig Heart Boy*. The collection now has over 80 productions for schools to access, alongside a range of new resources to enrich classroom learning. Pupils in over 7,500 educational institutions in 62 countries have access to high-quality theatre through the National Theatre Collection.

Image: Harry Elletson



Blues for an Alabama Sky and *Nye* join National Theatre Collection. Images: Marc Brenner and Johan Persson

As well as the expansion of the National Theatre Collection, two new nationwide schools' tours are also planned. In autumn 2026, a schools adaptation of Nima Taleghani's version of *Bacchae* is going to reach over 10,000 secondary school students on an eight-week tour.

And for primary schools, the National Theatre and the Unicorn Theatre are co-producing *The Last Wild*. Adapted by Jude Christian from the award-winning novel by Piers Torday, the production will open at the Unicorn in February 2027, before touring across England.

Find out more about work happening with the National Theatre's Learning department, including the National Theatre Collection and schools' tours: nationaltheatre.org.uk/learn-explore/

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Written by
Jean Genet

In a new version written and directed by
Kip Williams

13 OCTOBER - 29 NOVEMBER 2025

WHEN WE ARE MARRIED

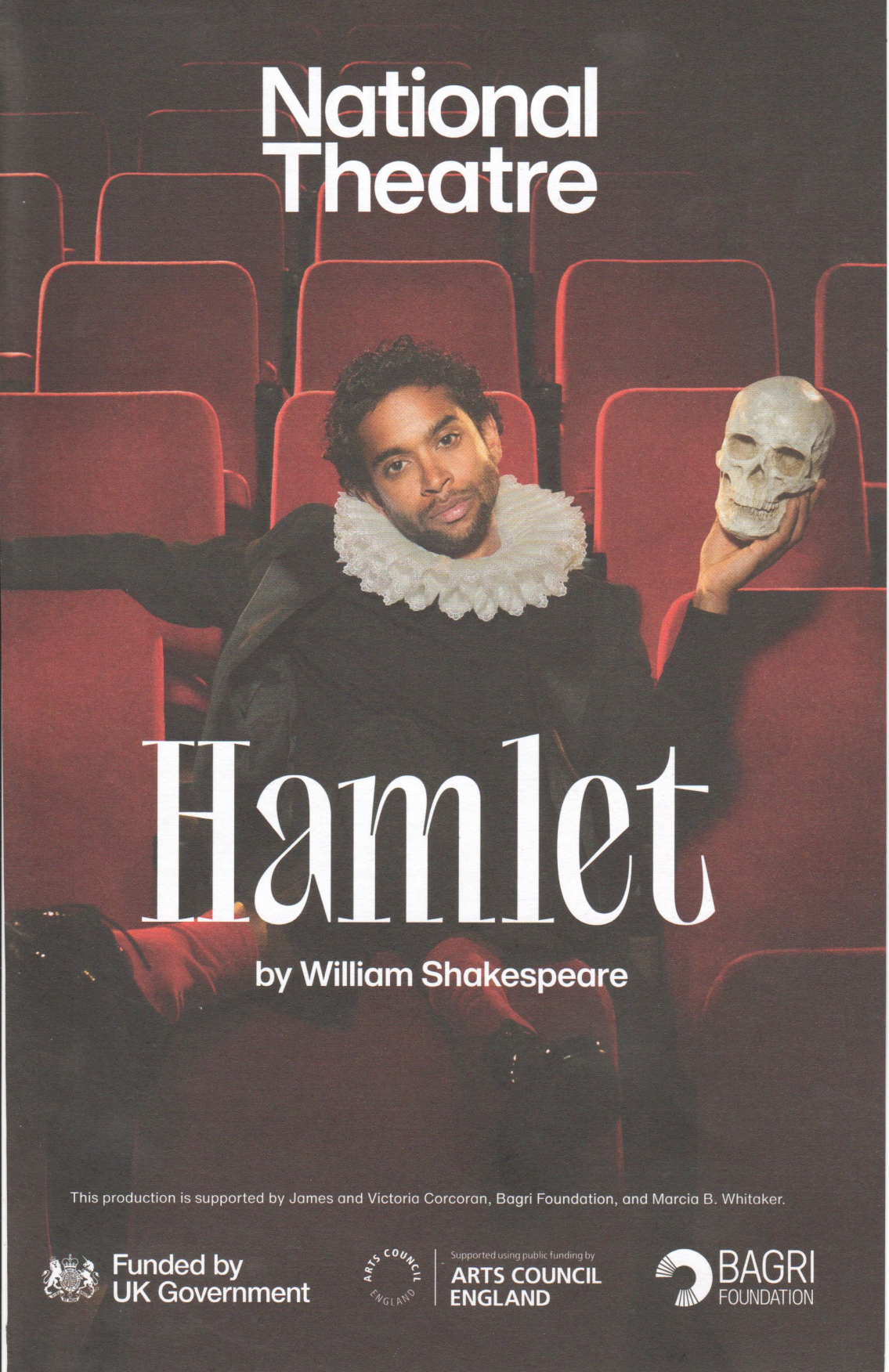
Written by
J. B. Priestley

Directed by
Tim Sheader

6 DECEMBER 2025 - 7 FEBRUARY 2026

DONMARWAREHOUSE.COM

41 Earlham Street, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9LX



This production is supported by James and Victoria Corcoran, Bagri Foundation, and Marcia B. Whitaker.

Funded by UK Government

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BAGRI FOUNDATION

The Company

CAST

(in alphabetical order)

Hamlet	**Hiran Abeysekera**
Guildenstern	**Joe Bolland**
Marcellus / Captain	**Phil Cheadle**
Gertrude	**Ayesha Dharker**
Ghost / Player King / First Gravedigger	**Ryan Ellsworth**
Laertes	**Tom Glenister**
Osric / Voltemand	**Mary Higgins**
Nurse / Priest	**Liz Jadav**
Fortinbras	**Kiren Kebaili-Dwyer**
Rosencrantz	**Hari Mackinnon**
Ophelia	**Francesca Mills**
Cornelius / English Ambassador / Second Gravedigger	**Sophia Papadopoulos**
Claudius	**Alistair Petrie**
First Player	**Siobhán Redmond**
Francisco / Reynaldo	**Seb Slade**
Polonius	**Geoffrey Streatfeild**
Bernardo	**Noel White**
Horatio	**Tessa Wong**

SUPERNUMERARIES

Adil Akram, Yemisi Bello, Henry Brackenridge, Toni Brooks, Dominic Farrow, Ting Fung, Rachelle Grubb, Choy-Ling Man, Derek Oppong and Selina Patankar

UNDERSTUDIES

Hamlet	**Hari Mackinnon**
Guildenstern/Priest/Fortinbras/ Rosencrantz	**Seb Slade**
Marcellus/Francisco/Reynaldo/Bernardo	**Kiren Kebaili-Dwyer**
Gertrude/English Ambassador/ First Player	**Liz Jadav**
Ghost/Player King/ First Gravedigger/Polonius	**Noel White**
Laertes	**Joe Bolland**
Osric/Voltemand/Ophelia/Horatio	**Sophia Papadopoulos**
Cornelius/Nurse/Captain/ Second Gravedigger	**Mary Higgins**
Claudius	**Phil Cheadle**

MUSICIANS

Carducci String Quartet: **Matthew Denton** (Violin), **Michelle Fleming** (Violin 2), **Eoin Schmidt-Martin** (Viola), **Emma Denton** (Cello)

Recorded at the National Theatre and engineered by Niall John Acott

Director	**Robert Hastie**
Set and Costume Designer	**Ben Stones**
Lighting Designer	**Jessica Hung Han Yun**
Sound Designer	**Alexandra Faye Braithwaite**
Composer	**Richard Taylor**
Movement Director	**Ira Mandela Siobhan**
Fight Director	**Kate Waters**
Casting	**Alastair Coomer CDG** and **Martin Poile CDG**
Voice Coach	**Shereen Ibrahim**
Associate Director	**Georgie Staight**
Producer	**Fran Miller**
Production Manager	**Mekel Edwards**
Company Stage Manager	**Lizzie Donaghy**
Deputy Stage Manager	**Emily Porter**
Assistant Stage Managers	**Wen-Hsin Chiang** and **Devon James-Bowen (Book Cover)**
Stage Management Cover	**Isy Eagle-Wilsher**
Deputy Production Manager	**Lisa Hood**
Project Draughting	**Alan Bain** and **Nathan James**
Digital Art	**Daniel Radley-Bennett**
Costume Supervisor	**Natasha Prynne**
Assistant Costume Supervisor	**Caroline Alice Stevens**
Wigs, Hair & Make-up Supervisor	**Adele Brandman**
Running Wardrobe Supervisor	**Ruth Williams**
Props Supervisor	**Charlotte King**
Props Buyer	**Kinga Czynciel**
Props Making Coordinators	**Tabitha Petit-How** and **Jess Shanks**
Lighting Supervisor	**Jeremy Turnbull**
Lead Lighting Programmer	**Will Frost**
Assistant Lighting Programmer	**Kiri Baildon-Smith**
Production Sound Engineer	**Joel Price**
Sound Operator	**Laura Gingell**
Radio Mic Supervisor	**Jacob Dicker**
Stage Supervisors	**Yuri Quieroz** and **Prad Pankhania**
Automation	**Joanne Colley** and **Adam Fretwell**
Rigging Supervisors	**Danny O'Neill** and **Mateusz Slonowski**
Flying Supervisor	**Suresh Chawla**
Construction Supervisor	**Barrie Nield**
External Scenic Construction	**Scott Fleary**
Scenic Art Supervisor	**Lindsay Tuffnell**
Production Design Assistant	**Jasmine Araujo**
Production Photographer	**Sam Taylor**

The National Theatre's workshops are responsible for, on this production:
armoury; costume; props & furniture; scenic art; scenic construction; scenic lighting; sound & video; wigs, hair & make-up.

Opening

Lyttelton Theatre, 2 October 2025

Length

about 2 hours and 50 minutes, including a 20-minute interval

NB This time is approximate. Please check with front-of-house staff for accurate timing

Bookshop

Visit our Bookshop on the ground floor and explore our wide range of gifts, books and exclusive National Theatre mementos. Every purchase made in the Bookshop supports the vital work of the National Theatre.

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Guided Theatre Tours

Take a guided tour of the National Theatre and discover the secrets of one of the most iconic buildings on the South Bank. Tours run Monday to Saturday and last for an hour and 15 minutes.

For availability, pricing and to book, visit **nationaltheatre.org.uk/your-visit/things-to-do/theatre-tours**

Assisted performances

There is a loop system for hearing aid users with a T-switch. If you do not have a hearing aid, there is an infrared audio system available. Please ask a member of the front-of-house team to direct you to the collection point on arrival.

Smart Caption Glasses are not available for performances of *Hamlet*.

Audio-described performances
Friday 17 October at 7.15pm
(Touch Tour at 5.45pm)
Saturday 15 November at 1.30pm
(Touch Tour at noon)

To book on a Touch Tour, please call the Access line 020 7452 3961.

British Sign Language-interpreted performances
Saturday 8 November at 1.30pm
Thursday 13 November at 6.30pm

Captioned performances
Thursday 9 October at 7.15pm
Thursday 20 November at 7.15pm

Relaxed performance
Thursday 6 November at 7.15pm

Audio-description provided by **Eleanor Margolies and Timna Fibert**
BSL provided by **Clare Edwards**
Open captioning by **Suzanne Biesty** and **Rosey Lock**
Access coordination by **David Bellwood**

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The Fifth Step, in cinemas from 27 November
Hamlet, in cinemas from 22 January

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Poster

Photography (Hiran Abeysekera) by Rosaline Shahnavaz.

Art direction and design by National Theatre Graphic Studio.

Programme

Researched and compiled by Sarah Corke and Paulina Kominiak of National Theatre Publishing.

Designed by John Lloyd.

Programme printed by Impress Print Services.

To advertise in National Theatre programmes or cast sheets, please contact Paul Heitzman at Cabbells.
paul@cabbells.uk

'Why, she wouldn't even harm a fly...'

Dr Sophie Duncan on truth, lies and the power of direct address in *Hamlet*

Detail from *Ophelia* by John William Waterhouse. Image: GL Archive/Alamy Stock Photo
Detail from *Polish Hamlet. Portrait of Aleksander Wielopolski* by Jacek Malczewski. Image: piemags/Alamy Stock Photo

What's the most frightening moment in film? One popular answer is the shower scene in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). The innocent Marion Crane (Janet Leigh) screams at knife-wielding madman Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins), then dies in her black-and-white blood to the detriment of cinemagoers' personal hygiene – the shower was suddenly a dangerous place. But to my mind, the real horror lies in *Psycho*'s final frame. Bates sits alone in the police station, his now entirely dissociated mind full of his dead mother's thoughts, voiced by a brilliantly creepy and transatlantic Virginia Gregg. In his mother's internal monologue, Bates congratulates himself that the police force will recognise his mildness and innocence, shown by his deliberate refusal to swat a fly creeping across his hand. So far, disturbing enough. But then, the camera cuts away from the fly and back to Perkins' face. He looks up as the mother-voice intones its final line, confidently anticipating the police's verdict: 'Why, she wouldn't even harm a fly...'.

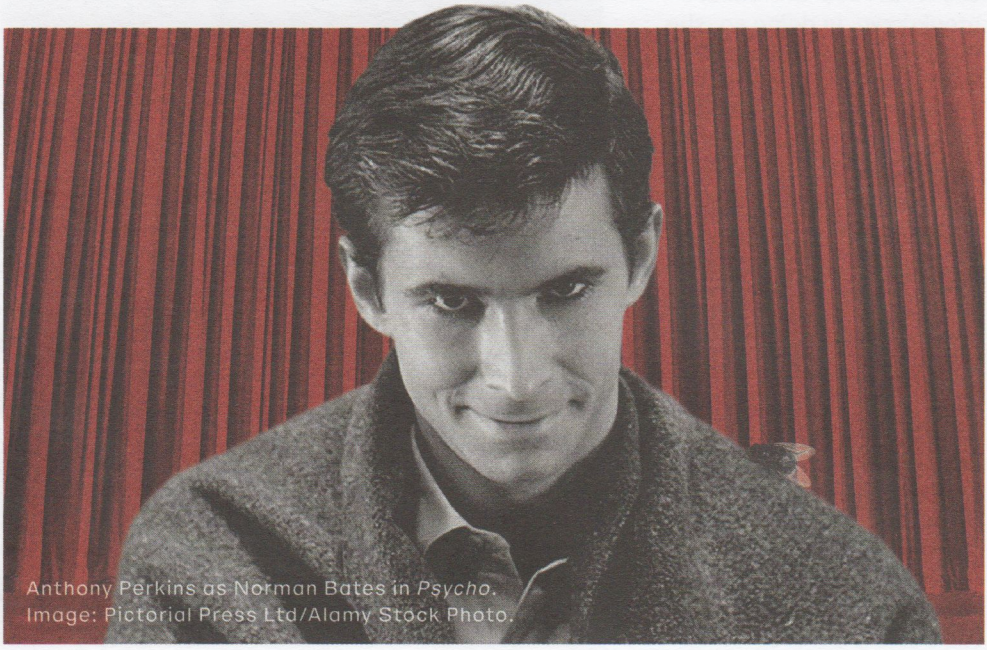
Bates smiles. Then he looks at the camera. At us.

It's not the menace that is unnerving. It's that this killer can see us: we are no longer safe in the audience, but as vulnerable as Janet Leigh in the shower stall. Such is the power of breaking the fourth wall.

As always, screen performance steals its best tricks from theatre. When Oliver Hardy stares incredulously at his audiences in the Laurel and Hardy films, he's using an old vaudeville trick of the lone straight man oppressed by a ludicrous world. When comedy troupe Monty Python abandon a sketch halfway through or otherwise crash through the naturalistic conventions of television, they are recreating the thrill of a play that goes wrong or suddenly bursts out of its frame. *Fleabag*, the wrenching, comedy-drama in which Phoebe Waller-Bridge's antiheroine acknowledges the viewers in direct proportion to the awfulness of her life, began as a one-woman stage show at the Edinburgh Fringe, in which Waller-Bridge's character spoke directly to the audience. Even in *The Big Short* (2015), director Adam McKay's satirical biopic of the 2008 financial crisis, voice-overs and addresses to camera borrow from the asides and soliloquies that date back to ancient Greek drama. Initially, characters interrupted dialogue to address the chorus or audience in ways which clarified their behaviour; as the centuries progressed, Roman protagonists began to soliloquise in ways that also explored philosophical themes like fate and morality.

By Shakespeare's time, soliloquies did both, offering a vital opportunity to follow characters' motives and emotions during complex plots, hearing truths (personal and universal) from their point of view. The playhouse settings intensified the feeling of immersion in the characters' lives. For Shakespeare, there was no such thing as the 'fourth wall', the proscenium arch dividing actors and audience in many theatres. Elizabethan theatregoers could pay extra to sit on the stage; outdoor playhouses bathed players and playgoers in the same shared light; and actors wore 'modern dress', contemporary (Elizabethan) clothes augmented as needed by crowns, togas, or other devices.

The convention that characters speak truthfully in soliloquy is especially important in *Hamlet*, set at a court – Elsinore – which really can't cope with the truth. Is the court unable to see or unwilling to admit the circumstances of Claudius' leap to the throne? Even Hamlet cruelly denies authorship of his letters to Ophelia, while Polonius' tactic for monitoring Laertes' French sojourn is to send a servant to throw out lies about him to see if anyone bites: fake news as honeytrap.



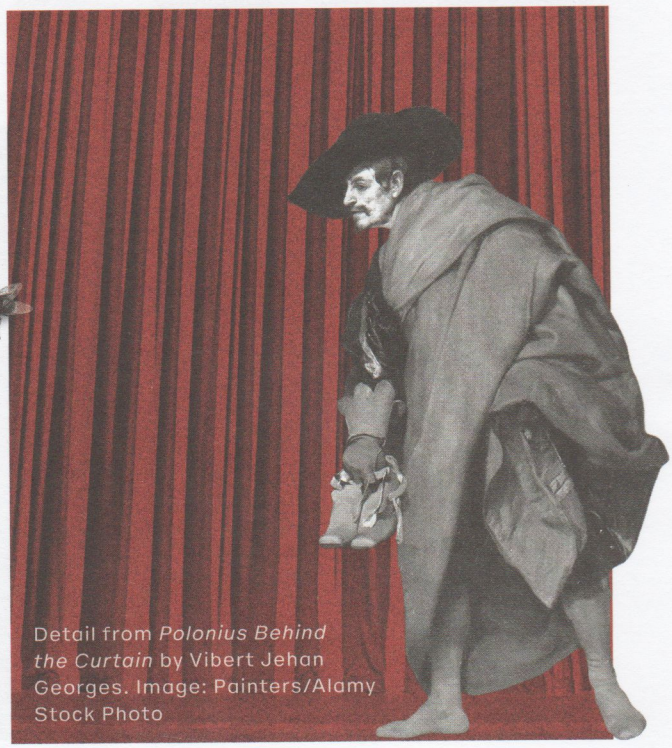
Anthony Perkins as Norman Bates in *Psycho*.
Image: Pictorial Press Ltd/Alamy Stock Photo.

As audience members, we rely on soliloquies to understand who Shakespeare's characters really are, whether that's revealed in the vulnerability of distress, or the isolation of prayer. It can also feel dangerous to spend too long inside these characters' minds: when Claudius reveals his crimes, are we his confidants or his co-conspirators? Are we complicit in the play's bloodletting? Is there a temptation – even a responsibility – to stop the characters from going to their deaths? More frightening still, when Hamlet poses his questions of life and death, are we any more sure of the answers than he is? As a play, *Hamlet* is obsessed with the soliloquy, forcing characters unable to be open with each other to be honest with four centuries' worth of audiences.

In other Shakespearean tragedies, characters sometimes soliloquise in exultation, like Juliet anticipating a glorious wedding-night with Romeo, or Lady Macbeth plotting her husband's ascent to the throne. In *Hamlet*, characters speak to us when their thoughts are unbearable. Ophelia bursts out in grief at having 'seen what I have seen, see what I see' of Hamlet's breakdown. In doing so, she offers our only picture of Hamlet in happier times; a young man who, as Denmark's 'rose' and 'the glass of fashion' was the beloved epicentre of Danish culture. Claudius breaks off his abortive prayers to explain to the audience why he murdered his brother: he confesses to us because he can't confess to God. Polonius, trying to decide whether Hamlet is lovesick or just sick, admits in his asides that Hamlet's madness is starting to make a terrible sort of sense.

No wonder Hamlet chooses to confide in the audience. His uncle is a murderer; his mother's behaviour and judgment appal him; Ophelia lies about Polonius' surveillance, and his childhood friends lie about everything else. Only Horatio is trustworthy. Shakespeare makes this obvious from *Hamlet*'s opening scene: even after twice encountering the ghost, watchmen Marcellus and Bernardo enlist this penniless student to confirm what they're seeing: the state of Denmark is evidently so rotten that those who serve it no longer trust their own senses. The play (spoilers) ends with Hamlet appointing Horatio as the one truthful chronicler who will 'report me and my cause aright'. Horatio has served him well: when the players perform almost a true-crime-reconstruction of Old Hamlet's murder, Hamlet designates him the one reliable reader of Claudius' behaviour.

Hamlet's longing for the things Horatio embodies – honesty, disinterested friendship, the ability to read people correctly – anticipates our own 21st-century struggles to verify what's real amidst the mass of misinformation that



Detail from *Polonius Behind the Curtain* by Vibert Jehan Georges. Image: Painters/Alamy Stock Photo

Detail from *Hamlet and His Father's Ghost* by William Blake.
Image: piemags/Alamy Stock Photo

sometimes threatens to overwhelm us, especially online. We watch television programmes categorised as 'scripted reality', listen to confessional podcasts and TikToks or reels, and battle online scams in which malignant actors impersonate everyone from celebrities to our own families, whether in adverts for bogus products, or fake text messages asking 'mum' for money. Hamlet identifies that his uncle is the Shakespearean equivalent of the ultimate deepfake: someone who 'can smile, and smile, and be a villain', murdering his brother in broad daylight. At the same time, he struggles to trust the Ghost, even with the corroborating presences of the guards and Horatio. Hamlet's response tells us something about where truth resides in Shakespeare's play-world.

Despite the Ghost leaving his grave to reveal Claudius' crimes, Hamlet puts less faith in his father's spectre than in Claudius' response to the Players' performance. Claudius' reaction to a piece of theatre, a work of art, will show Hamlet the truth of who his stepfather is. When we look into the eyes of a 'player', whether they are impersonating an American psychopath on screen or a Danish prince on stage, their mind takes ours to places we didn't expect to go; places we perhaps find disturbing or frightening. This is as true now as it was in the 1590s, and as true for today's audiences as it is Claudius at his nephew's nightmarish premiere back in Elsinore. Encountering art, Shakespeare says in *Hamlet*, exposes us as we really are in a way that nothing else can match.

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Dr Sophie Duncan is an Artistic Associate at the National Theatre and Fellow of Magdalen College, University of Oxford. Her books include *Searching for Juliet: The Lives and Deaths of Shakespeare's First Tragic Heroine* (Sceptre).

'We'll hear a play to-morrow'

Sarah Crompton looks at the National Theatre's relationship to *Hamlet*

Hamlet is vital to the story of the National Theatre. Shakespeare's tragedy has been seen seven times on its stages and feels part of the heart of the place, often marking a significant moment in its history.

Hamlet opened the entire National Theatre project, at the Old Vic on 22 October 1963, in a production directed by Laurence Olivier and starring Peter O'Toole – at that point one of the most famous actors in the world on the back of his success in David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia*.

When Peter Hall took over the directorship, *Hamlet* became the first play to be rehearsed in Denys Lasdun's new National Theatre building on the South Bank in September 1975. 'We had champagne on the terrace to welcome the actors,' Hall writes in his diaries, recording his pleasure at a rehearsal room that is 'quiet, has good daylight, height and is properly warmed. After 21 years of rehearsing in cupboards, leaky halls, and bars smelling of last night's drink and tobacco, at last I am in a place with good conditions.'

In 1989, Richard Eyre's production became the frame for the final performance by the much-loved Ian Charleson, before his death from AIDS-related causes in January 1990, just weeks later. 'His performance was possessed,' wrote Eyre. 'He wasn't playing the part, he became it. By the end of the performance he was exhausted, each line of the last scene rung out of him. He stood at the curtain call like a bruised boxer after 16 rounds, battered by applause.'

That brilliant, death-defying final stand led to the foundation of the Ian Charleson award, a spotlight for talented young actors ever since. The irony is that the play had opened with a different actor as the philosophical prince, but Daniel Day-Lewis famously walked out of the production, though the reason still remains a mystery. Judi Dench, playing Gertrude, sensed the weight of the burden he felt he was carrying. 'It was like somebody with blinkers on.' He has never since returned to the theatre.

In 1986, Cicely Berry became the first woman to direct *Hamlet* for the National Theatre, with a workshop production at the Cottesloe, with Tim McInnerny as Hamlet. In 2000, Simon Russell Beale at 40 was the National's oldest Hamlet in a text that had been fiercely cut by director John Caird to excise Fortinbras entirely and make the production adaptable for a year-long world tour.

Nicholas Hytner's 2010 version with Rory Kinnear as the sweet prince, became one of the earliest titles offered 'On Demand' to schools, while the most recent schools' version of *Hamlet*, adapted by Jude Christian and directed by Tinuke Craig, took Kiren Kebaili-Dwyer (who is

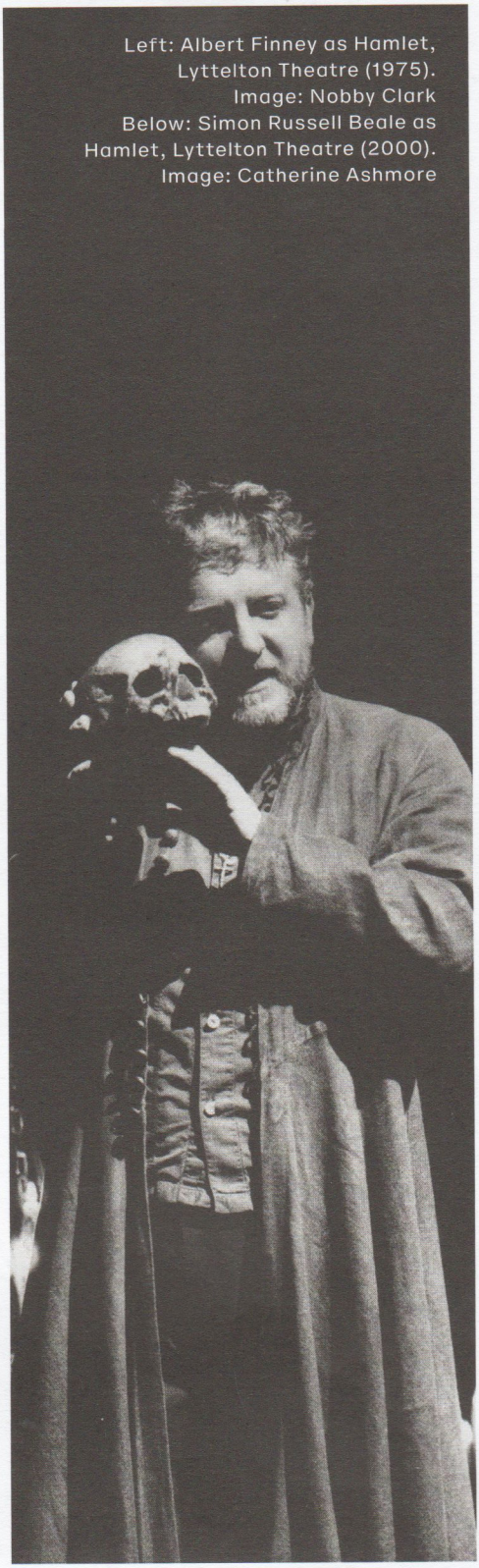
coincidentally in this current production) and then Simon Desvignes as Hamlet out on two primary schools tours, as well as a run in the Dorfman, reaching more than 13,000 young people.

A sense of excitement about a particular actor in the title role has often been the incentive for a production. Hall believed the National Theatre should produce *Hamlet* every few years but didn't himself much want to be its guiding hand; in 1965, he'd produced a generational version for the RSC with David Warner as a studenty prince in a long scarf. But then Finney said he wanted 'to try to examine a rougher and more instinctive form of classical acting' and Hall was sold. They made a deal which meant Finney agreed to appear in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, slated as the first production in the new Olivier theatre, provided he could do *Hamlet* first.

O'Toole also propelled himself into the role. While acting opposite each other in the film *Becket*, he and Richard Burton decided they would each like to take on the part under the direction of two great Hamlets from the past – John Gielgud, who played the part more than 500 times in five productions between 1930 and 1946, and Olivier, who immortalised his Oedipal interpretation in the 1948 film. A flip of a coin decided who worked with whom.

Jack Thorne covered what happened to Burton under the direction of Gielgud in their famous Broadway *Hamlet* in 2023's *The Motive and the Cue*. The most recent addition to the National's *Hamlet* iconography, it looked at the tension behind the scenes of a production that ran for a record 137 performances at the Lunt-Fontaine.

Olivier arguably fumbled his hand. He wanted to stage *Hamlet* to prove once and for all that the fledgling Royal Shakespeare Company, formed in 1961 with the 'tyro' director Peter Hall in charge, would not have the monopoly on Shakespeare. His original casting put Tom Courtenay next to the name of



Left: Albert Finney as Hamlet, Lyttelton Theatre (1975). Image: Nobby Clark
Below: Simon Russell Beale as Hamlet, Lyttelton Theatre (2000). Image: Catherine Ashmore

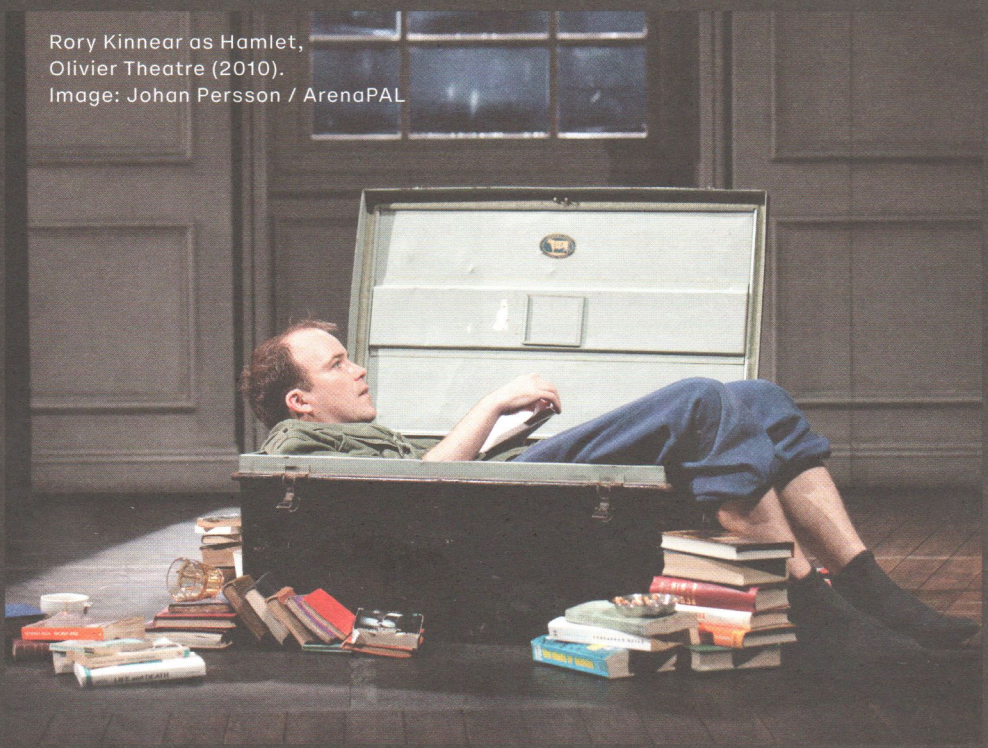
his concept of the play as a kind of 16th-century *Look Back in Anger*.

But once he started directing O'Toole, he failed to give his star any leeway. William Gaskill, working alongside Olivier as founding director, said he insisted 'I know my way around the map of *Hamlet* much more than you can possibly do' and 'tried to make O'Toole act Hamlet as he, Olivier, would have done.' O'Toole, committed to just 27 performances because of film dates, later recalled: 'If you want to know what it's like to be lonely, really lonely, try playing Hamlet.'

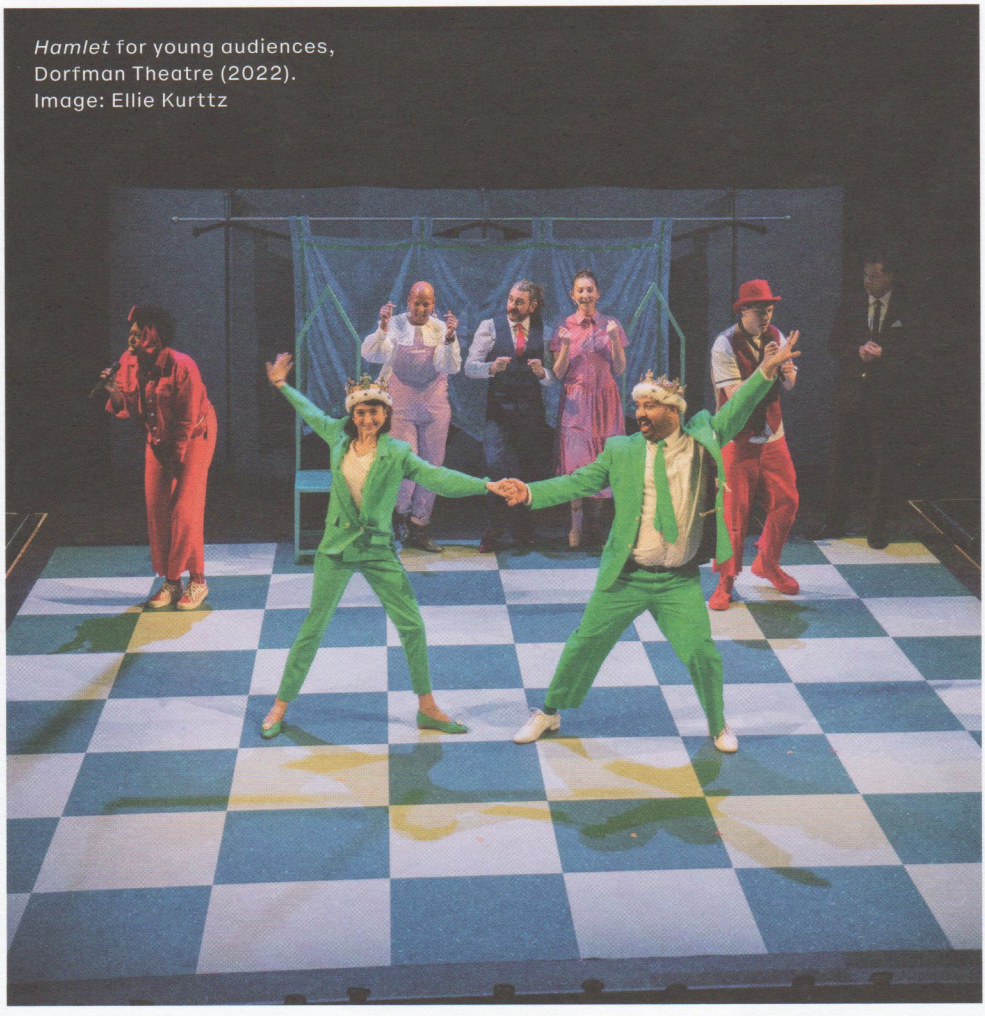
The production, however, generated one unexpected and extraordinary bonus. It was seen by Kenneth Ewing, who went on to become agent to Tom Stoppard – and suggested to the aspiring playwright that it might be amusing to write something about the supernumeraries in the play. The result was *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, first seen on the Edinburgh Fringe in 1966, and snapped up by Olivier's literary manager Kenneth Tynan for a production at the Old Vic in 1967 with John Stride as Rosencrantz, Edward Petherbridge as Guildenstern, and John McEnery as Hamlet.

It was a sensation – and a boon to the precarious bank balance of the fledgling theatre company. According to Daniel Rosenthal's *National Theatre Story*, by the summer of 1969, the National Theatre's half-share of its overall profits from the film sale, Broadway and a US tour had brought in around £80,000, equivalent to almost a third of its Arts Council grant for 1967–8 and 'quite some return on the £250 paid'.

Hamlet itself has a habit of inspiring new works – that often find their way to the stages of the National Theatre. In 2000, for example, Simon Russell Beale went from playing an unusually sweet and gentle Hamlet, to Charlotte Jones' *Humble Boy*, which transplanted a sense of Elsinore to the Cotswolds and allowed Russell Beale's Felix a happy ending of acceptance, a true 'let be'.



Rory Kinnear as Hamlet, Olivier Theatre (2010). Image: Johan Persson / ArenaPAL



Hamlet for young audiences, Dorfman Theatre (2022). Image: Ellie Kurttz

When Nicholas Hytner began to work on his version of *Hamlet*, set in a paranoid surveillance state, he asked his Hamlet of choice, Rory Kinnear, 'whether he'd mind warming up' as the ultimate revenger – Vindice in Middleton's *The Revenger's Tragedy* in a production directed by Melly Still in 2008.

The vicious knowingness Kinnear brought to that part was nothing like the weary despair he uncovered when he played Hamlet two years later, charting his way through the play as a rational man in an irrational and frightening world. But Hytner also buttressed his production with Michael Lesslie's *Prince of Denmark*, a National Youth Theatre venture that imagined the interactions between Hamlet, Ophelia and Laertes in a prequel set ten years before Shakespeare's play begins.

That's the thing about *Hamlet*. It is so full of mysteries and questions that it constantly acts as a prompt for other writers. The breadth and depth of its concerns, its constantly shifting philosophy, makes it a play for our and every time.

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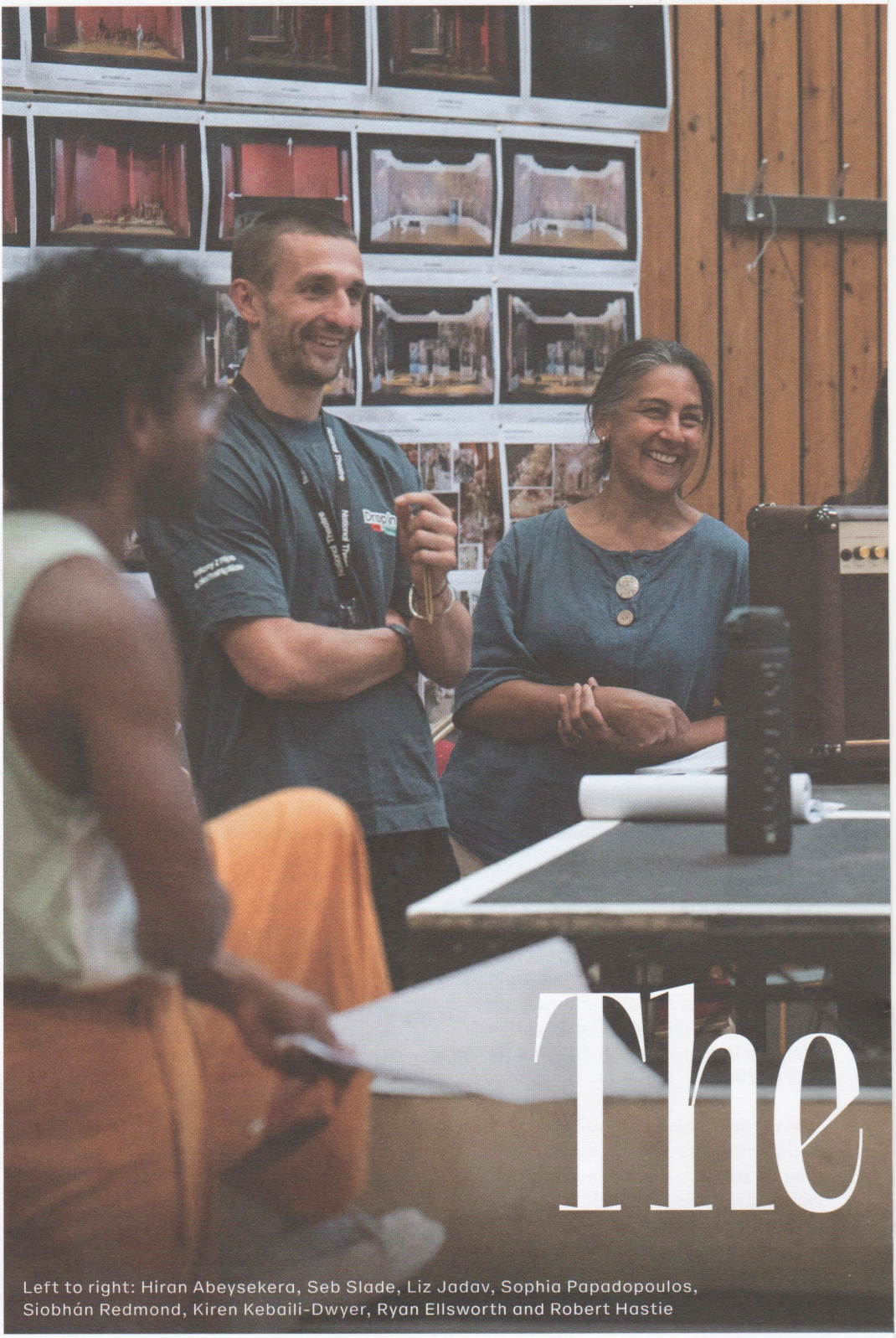
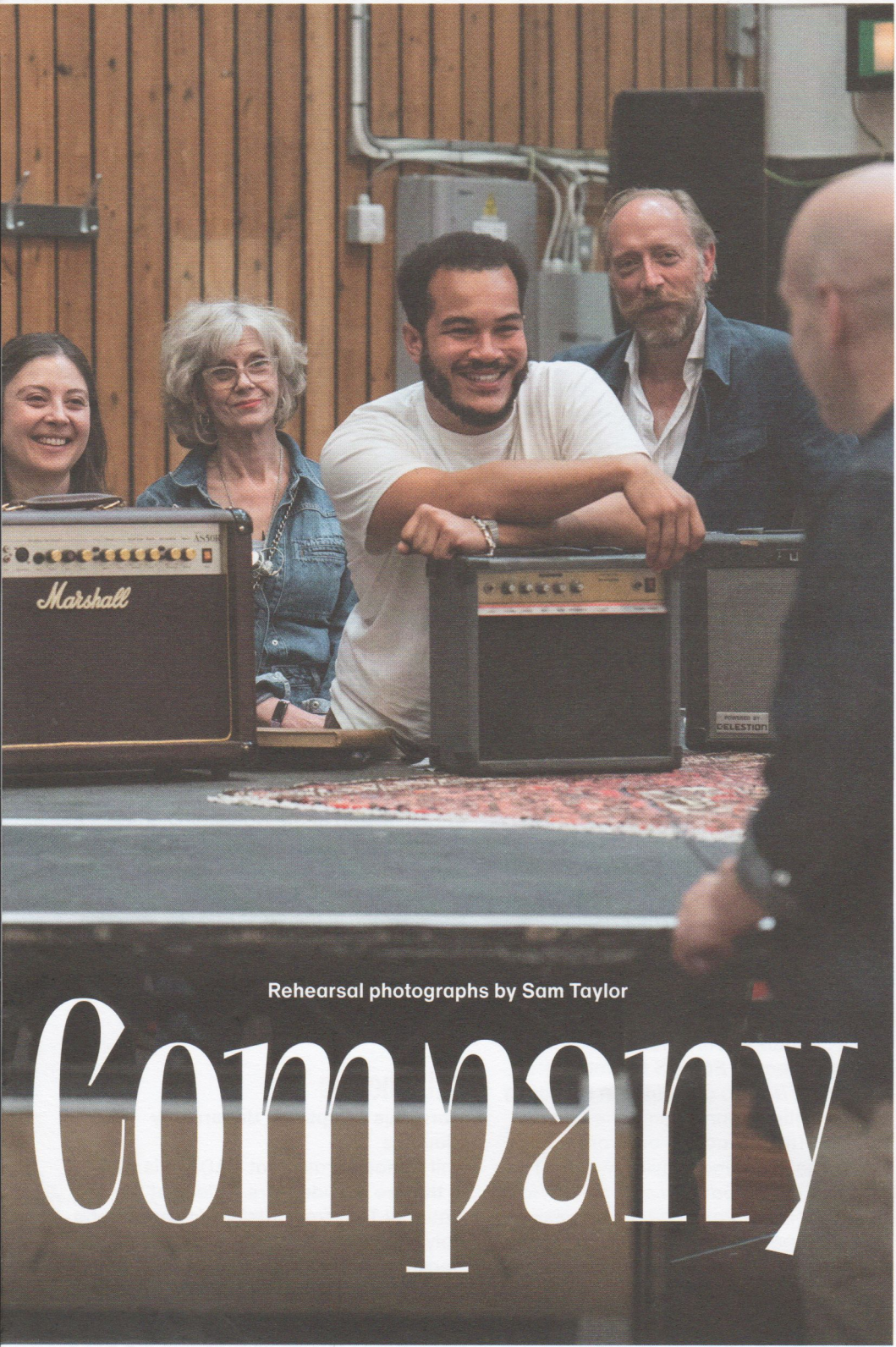
Sarah Crompton is a writer and broadcaster on the arts. She is theatre critic for *WhatsOnStage*, co-presenter of the *WhatsOnStage* podcast and dance critic for the *Observer*.



Left to right: Hiran Abeysekera, Seb Slade, Liz Jadav, Sophia Papadopoulos, Siobhán Redmond, Kiren Kebaili-Dwyer, Ryan Ellsworth and Robert Hastie



Rehearsal photographs by Sam Taylor

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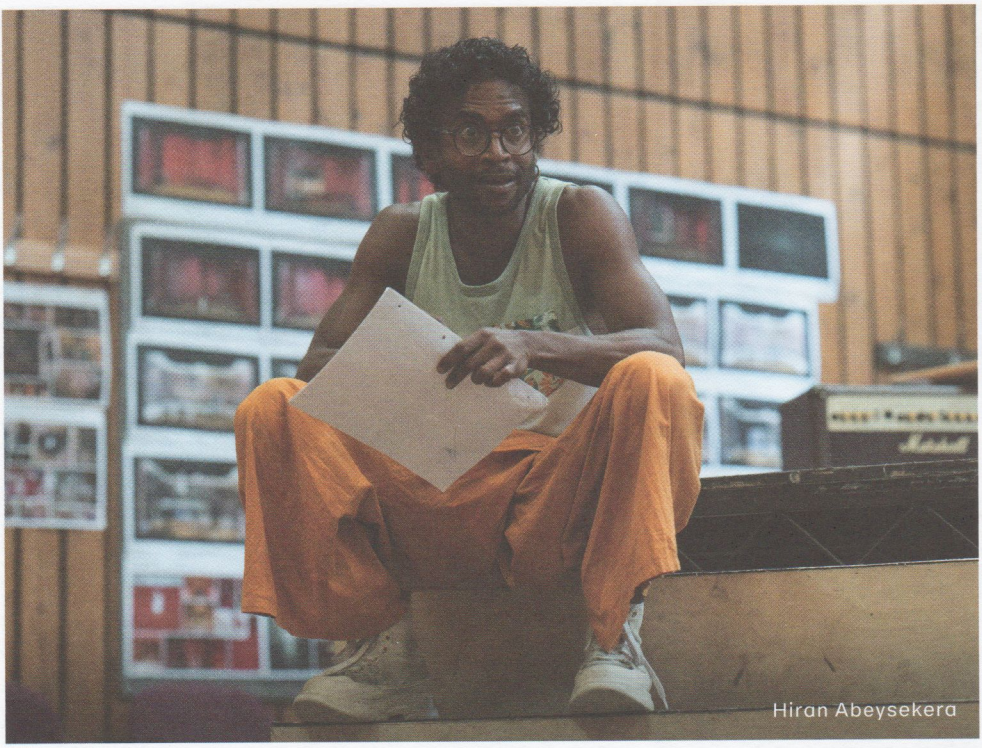


Hiran Abeysekera

Hiran Abeysekera

Hamlet

Hiran Abeysekera trained at RADA. His work in **theatre** includes *The Father and the Assassin* (2023), *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* and *War Horse* (at the Proms; also for the BBC and Royal Albert Hall) for the National Theatre; *Cymbeline*, *Hamlet* and *The Taming of the Shrew* for the RSC; *Tempest* and *The Prisoner* for Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord; *Botticelli in the Fire* at Hampstead; *Peter Pan* at Regent's Park; *You in Mid Air* for RADA at the Circus Space; *Rats' Tales* at the Royal Exchange; *Tartuffe* for English Touring Theatre; *EQUUS* for Joint Effort Company; *Romeo and Juliet* in Sri Lanka for the British Council; and *The Life of Pi* at Sheffield Crucible, on Broadway and in the West End (Olivier Award). **TV** includes *The Good Karma Hospital*, *Holby City*, *Find Me in Paris* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. **Films** include *The Magic Faraway Tree*. **Radio** includes *Dear Harry Kane*, (BBC Audio Drama Award for Best Actor), *Broken Paradise* and *The Last Time I Saw Richard*.

Joe Bolland

Guildenstern / Understudy Laertes

Joe Bolland trained at Guildhall School of Music and Drama. His work in **theatre** includes *Othello* and *Our Generation* (also at Chichester) at the National Theatre; *Playai* at Riverside Studios; *How He Lied to Her Husband* at the Orange Tree; *Paper Cut* at Theatre503; and *The Play That Goes Wrong* in the West End. **TV** includes *Grace*, *Sherwood* and *Shetland*. **Films** include *Martyr's Lane* and *Choose or Die*. **Radio** includes *The Family Business*, *United Kingdom* and *Patient Light*.

Phil Cheadle

Marcellus / Captain / Understudy Claudius

Phil Cheadle trained at RADA. His work in **theatre** includes *Mrs Affleck* at the National Theatre; *Outside Voice* for Soho Poly; *Antigone [on strike]* at Park Theatre; *Reasons to Stay Alive* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Sheffield Crucible; *Table* at the New Vic; *The Cardinal* at Southwark Playhouse; *Breaking the Code*

at the Royal Exchange, Manchester; *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2* and *Bedlam* at Shakespeare's Globe; *The Changeling* on tour and at the Barbican; *Dear Uncle* and *Neighbourhood Watch* (also at the Tricycle and 59E59, New York) at Stephen Joseph; *Events While Guarding the Bofors Gun* and *Variation on a Theme* at Finborough; *Henry V* at Regent's Park; *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* at Chichester; *All My Sons* at Leicester Curve; *Far from the Madding Crowd* for ETT; *Blue Remembered Hills* at Northern Stage; *Knives in Hens* and *Tartuffe* at the Arcola; *Macbeth* at West Yorkshire Playhouse; and *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* in the West End. **TV** includes *Harlots*, *Dark Angel*, *Silent Witness*, *Coronation Street* and *Hollyoaks*. **Films** include *1917*, *John Carter*, *Shalborne* and *Comes a Bright Day*. **Radio** includes *Hell Cats*.

Ayesha Dharker

Gertrude

Ayesha Dharker's work in **theatre** includes *The Father and the Assassin* (2022 and 2023), *Pericles* and *The Ramayana* at the National Theatre; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Othello* and *Arabian Nights* for the RSC; *The Book of Dust – La Belle Sauvage* at the Bridge; *Maryland*, *Disconnect* and *The Djinns of Eidgah* at the Royal Court; *White Teeth* and *When the Crows Visit* at Kiln; *Richard II* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse; *King Troll* at New Diorama; *The Island Nation* at the Arcola; *Doctor Faustus* at Bristol Old Vic; and *Bombay Dreams* in the West End and on Broadway. **TV** includes *Silent Witness*, *Vera*, *Finding Alice*, *Holby City*, *Indian Summers*, *Critical*, *The Indian Doctor*, *Coronation Street*, *Doctor Who*, *The Commander*, *Bodies*, *Waking the Dead*, *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee*, *Cutting It* and *Doctors*. **Films** include *The Father*, *Star Wars: Attack of the Clones*, *The Terrorist*, *Anita and Me*, *Outsourced*, *Mad, Sad and Bad*, *Loins of Punjab Presents*, *Mistress of Spices*, *Colour Me Kubrick*, *Mystic Masseur*, *Arabian Nights*, *Split Wide Open Saaz*, *City of Joy* and *Manika, une vie plus tard*.

Ryan Ellsworth

Ghost / Player King / First Gravedigger

Ryan Ellsworth trained at LAMDA. His work in **theatre** includes *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Motive at the Cue* (also Noël Coward) at the National

Alistair Petrie

Theatre; *Romeo and Juliet* and *Henry V* at Regent's Park; *The Wizard of Oz* at Sheffield Crucible; *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Custom of the Country* at Shakespeare's Globe; *Labyrinth* at Hampstead; *Cymbeline* and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* for Cheek by Jowl, the Barbican and on international tour; *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* at Theatr Clwyd and on tour; *Where There's a Will* for English Touring Theatre; *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* for the Reduced Shakespeare Company on UK and European tours; *The Round Dance* for Camden Round House; *Man and Superman* for Shaw's Corner; *Antigone* at the Old Vic; and *To Kill a Mockingbird* at the Gielgud. **TV** includes *Wednesday*, *Angel of Darkness*, *EastEnders*, *Manhunt*, *Island at War* and *BBC Ghost Story for Christmas: Woman of Stone*. **Films** include *A Royal Winter* and *Bel Ami*. **Radio** includes *Rare Earth*.

Tom Glenister

Laertes

Tom Glenister trained at Guildhall School of Music and Drama. His work in **theatre** includes *Dear Octopus* and *Dear England* at the National Theatre; and *A Doll's House* (2025 Ian Charleson Award nomination) and *Chariots of Fire* at Sheffield Crucible. **TV** includes *Trigger Point*, *Miss Austen*, *Sherwood*, *Grantchester*, *Isolation Stories*, *Industry*, *Vera* and *Doc Martin*. **Films** include *One Life* and *The Most Reluctant Convert*. **Radio** includes *Transparency*, *Welcome to Cloudstreet*, *Dedication*, *Broken English*, *Personal Shopper*, *Base Lines*, *In Search of Lost Time*, *The Moon That Night*, *A Northern Soul*, *War and Peace*, *Little Grudges* and *Ivan and the Dogs*.

Mary Higgins

Osric / Voltemand / Understudy Cornelius/Nurse/Captain/Second Gravedigger

Mary Higgins' work in **theatre** includes, as writer/performer, *The Last Show Before We Die* for Hotter Project at The Yard and Bristol Old Vic; and *FITTER* and *HOTTER* for Hotter Project at Soho Theatre; as performer, *A Billion Times I Love You* at Liverpool Everyman; *Callisto: a queer epic* at Edinburgh Fringe and the Arcola; *Suddenly Last Summer* at Oxford Playhouse; *A Streetcar Named Desire* at Keble O'Reilly Theatre; and *Circleville, Circlevalley* for Experimental Theatre Company. **TV** includes *The English Game*, *Traitors* and *Poirot: The Hallowe'en Party*. **Films** include *She Said*, *Cinderella* (2020), *Misbehaviour* and the upcoming project by Alejandro Gonzales Iñárritu. **Audio** includes, as writer/performer, *Lem N Ginge: The Princess of Kakos* and *Life of Bi* for Hotter Project.

Liv Jadav

Nurse / Priest / Understudy Gertrude/ English Ambassador/First Player

Liz Jadav's work in **theatre** includes *The Tempest* for the RSC; *A Beginner's Guide to Widowhood* on tour; *Twelfth Night: A Cornish Tale* at Stafford Gatehouse; *Oliver Twist* at Chester Storyhouse;

Geoffrey Streatfeild

Francesca Mills

A Christmas Carol and *My Dad's Corner Shop* at Derby Theatre/Playhouse; *Joking Apart* and *Better Off Dead* at Stephen Joseph and on tour; *The Twits* at Leicester Curve and on tour; *Stone Face* at Finborough; *Cymbeline* and *Stepping Out* on UK tours; *The Ugly Duckling* (co-production with Sheffield Theatres), *My Name is Stephen Luckwell*, *The Elves and the Shoemaker*, *Under the Story Tree* and *Can You Whistle, Johanna?* at Nottingham Playhouse; *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Tempest* and *The Wind in the Willows* for Illyria; *Pygmalion* at the Old Vic; and *Grimms* at Trafalgar Studios.

Kiren Kebaili-Dwyer

Fortinbras / Understudy Marcellus/ Francisco/Reynaldo/Bernardo

Kiren Kebaili-Dwyer trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and with Complicité. His work in **theatre** includes *Hamlet* (Primary Theatre) and *Much Ado About Nothing* at the National Theatre; *First Encounters: The Tempest* for the RSC; and *Drive Your Plough Over the Bones of the Dead* for Complicité. **TV** includes *The Wheel of Time* (season three), *Doctors* and *Lewis* (season nine). **Films** include *Comedown*. **Voice work** includes *Assassin's Creed: Mirage*, *The Carpenter's Flame*, *Thieves!*, *That Hideous Strength* and *BBC Bitesize History – Abolition of the Slave Trade*. **Directing** includes *The Journey Project* for Complicité.

Hari Mackinnon

Rosencrantz / Understudy Hamlet

Hari Mackinnon trained at LAMDA. His work in **theatre** includes *The Father and the Assassin* (2023) at the National Theatre; *Our Cosmic Dust* at Park Theatre; *The Duchess of Malfi* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse; *The Comedy of Errors* at Shakespeare's Globe; and *The Cherry Orchard* for the Yard and English Touring Theatre. **TV** includes *A Taste for Murder* and *Staged*. **Radio** includes *How I Lost My Faith* and *9/11*.

Left to right: Siobhán Redmond, Geoffrey Streatfeild, Alistair Petrie, Seb Slade, Kiren Kebaili-Dwyer, Hiran Abeysekera and Noel White

Mary Higgins and Ayesha Dharker

Francesca Mills

Ophelia

Francesca Mills trained at the Academy for Theatre Arts. Her work in **theatre** includes *All of Us* and *A Pacifist's Guide to the War on Cancer* at the National Theatre; *Duchess of Malfi* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Shakespeare's Globe; *Malory Towers* for Wise Children; *The American Clock* at the Old Vic; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Sheffield Crucible; *Pity* at the Royal Court; *The Two Noble Kinsmen* at Shakespeare's Globe; *A Tale of Two Cities* at Regent's Park; *Cyrano de Bergerac* at Northern Broadsides and on UK tour; *The Government Inspector* at Birmingham Rep and on UK tour; and *Peter Pan* at Wimbledon Theatre. **TV** includes *Transaction*, *Silent Witness*, *Time Bandits*, *Boat Story*, *Worzel Gummidge*, *Harlots*, *Witcher: Blood Origin*, *Pistol* and *Sneakerhead*.

Sophia Papadopoulos

Cornelius / English Ambassador / Second Gravedigger / Understudy Osric/ Voltemand/Ophelia/Horatio

Sophia Papadopoulos trained at LAMDA. Her work in **theatre** includes *Henry VI: Wars of the Roses* and *Henry VI: Rebellion* for the RSC; and *Hamlet* with the Young Shakespeare Company.

Alistair Petrie

Claudius

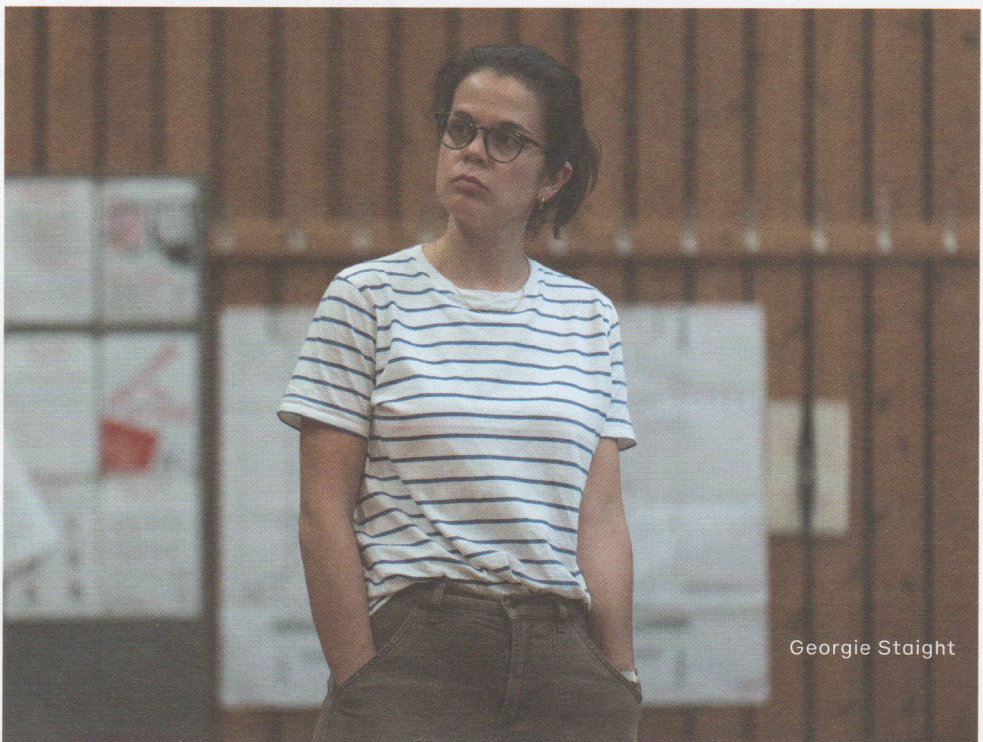
Alistair Petrie trained at LAMDA. His work in **theatre** includes *Time and the Conways*, *Henry IV Parts I and II*, *His Dark Materials*, *Playing with Fire* at the National Theatre; *Troilus and Cressida* for the RSC; *That Face* at Sheffield Crucible; *Mine* for Shared Experience; and *Brand*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Shakespeare in Love* in the West End. **TV** includes *The Night Manager*, *Sex Education*, *Star Wars: Andor*, *The Terror*,

The Following Events Are Based on a Pack of Lies, *Deep State*, *The Mark of Cain*, *Funny Woman*, *Why Didn't They Ask Evans?*, *Sherlock: The Sign of Three*, *Undercover*, *Lucan*, *Death by Lightning*, *Year of the Rabbit*, *Cranford* and *Utopia*. **Films** include *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, *Rush*, *Cloud Atlas*, *The Bank Job*, *A Bunch of Amateurs*, *Magpie*, *A Little Choas*, *Hellboy*, *Sulphur and White*, *Hampstead*, *Does It Feel Like the End of the World Yet*, *Face of an Angel*, *Last Encounters* and *The Cursed*. **Radio** includes *Lusus*, *Transcendental Wild Oats*, *Robert Voted No* and *Jay and Steve*. **Voice work** includes audiobooks: *Don Quixote*, *Blood and Sand* and *Death at the Priory*.

Siobhán Redmond

First Player

Siobhán Redmond is an Associate Artist of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Her work in **theatre** includes *Top Girls* and *Dido, Queen of Carthage* at the National Theatre; *Imperium*, *King John*, *Richard III*, *Dunsinane*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Spanish Tragedy* for the RSC; *All's Well That Ends Well* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Shakespeare's Globe; *The Human Body* at the Donmar; *The Straw Chair* at Finborough; *Vassa* at the Almeida; *Dunsinane*, *Mary Stuart* and *The House of Bernarda Alba* for National Theatre of Scotland; *Talking Heads* and *Exit the King* at Theatre Royal Bath; *U.S. and Them* at Hampstead; *Thon Man Molière*, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* and *As You Like It* at Edinburgh Royal Lyceum; *Perfect Days* at the Traverse, Hampstead and Vaudeville; *Macbeth* and *The Trick is to Keep Breathing* (also Royal Court) for Tron; *An Experienced Woman Gives Advice* at the Royal Exchange, Manchester; and *A Month of Sundays* at the Duchess. **TV** includes *Death in Paradise*, *The Sister Boniface Mysteries*, *Two Doors Down*, *Rain Dogs*, *Inside Number 9*, *Queens of Mystery*, *The Nest*, *Unforgotten*, *The Clique*, *The Replacement*, *Code of a Killer*, *The Catherine Tate Show*, *Boy Meets Girl*, *Between the Lines*, *Sorry About Last Night*, *In the Red* and *Midsomer Murders*. **Films** include *Glenrothan*, *One Night in Bath*, *First and Only*, *Beautiful People*, *Karmic Mothers*, *Captives*, *Two Hours* and *Latin for a Dark Room*. **Radio** includes 15 series of *McLevy*.



Georgie Staight

Phil Cheadle

Seb Slade

Francisco / Reynaldo / Understudy Guildenstern/Priest/Fortinbras/ Rosencrantz

Seb Slade trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. His work in **theatre** includes *Chariots of Fire* at Sheffield Theatres; and immersive productions *Night Zero* for Swamp Motel and *The Gunpowder Plot* for Layered Reality. **TV** includes *Criminal Record* (season two) and *War of the Worlds* (season three). **Films** include *Mission Impossible: The Final Reckoning*, *Wine Without Roses* and short films *Homecoming*, *Parity*, *Charlie 497*, *Tarantella*, *Don't Even Know You*, *26.2* and *Promenade*.

Geoffrey Streatfeild

Polonius

Geoffrey Streatfeild trained at RADA. His work in **theatre** includes *Young Chekhov: Ivanov*, *Young Chekhov: The Seagull*, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, *Children of the Sun*, *Earthquakes in London*, *Pains of Youth*, *The History Boys* and *Bacchai* at the National Theatre; *School for Scandal*, *Henry V*, *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2*, *Richard III* and *Henry VI Parts 1, 2 and 3* for the RSC; *A Mirror* for the Almeida and West End; *Cell Mates* and *Wild Honey* at Hampstead; *My Night with Reg*, *The Way of the World* and *Watch on the Rhine* at the Donmar; *Blithe Spirit* at Theatre Royal Bath and in the West End; *Macbeth* and *Copenhagen* at Sheffield Crucible; *Eigengrau* and *The Contingency Plan* at the Bush; *Nathan the Wise* and *The Merchant of Venice* at Chichester; *Mountain Language* at the Royal Court; and *Journey's End* in the West End. **TV** includes *A Cruel Love: The Ruth Ellis Story*, *Until I Kill You*, *Anatomy of a Scandal*, *Life*, *The Miniaturist*, *Prime Suspect 1973*, *The Hollow Crown*, *The Thick of It*, *New Worlds*, *Endeavour*, *Spooks*, *Point of Rescue*, *Above Suspicion*, *Ashes to Ashes*, *Hunter*, *Elizabeth I*, *20,000 Streets Under the Sky*, *Midsomer Murders*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, *Sword of Honour* and *Love in a Cold Climate*. **Films** include *Kursk*, *Making Noise Quietly*, *The Lady in the Van*, *A Royal Night Out*, *Spooks: The Greater Good*, *Rush*, *Private Peaceful*, *City Slacker*, *Angel*, *Match Point* and *Kinky Boots*.

Noel White

Bernardo / Understudy Ghost/Player King/First Gravedigger/Polonius

Noel White trained at Guildhall School of Music and Drama. His work in **theatre** includes *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Legend of King Arthur*, *Julius Caesar*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth* for Guildford Shakespeare Company; *Busman's Honeymoon*, *Towards Zero*, *The Unexpected Guest*, *Spider's Web* and *The Hollow* at the Mill at Sonning; *The Tempest* and *The Merchant of Venice* for Actors From The London Stage; *Robin Hood*, *Merlin*, *The Gift and the Glory*, *Of Mice and Men* and *Jason and the Argonauts* at The Dukes, Lancaster; *Grimm Tales* at Theatre by the Lake; *Far from the Madding Crowd* for ETT; *The Ladykillers*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* at Northcott, Exeter; *A Christmas Carol*, *Measure for Measure* and *As You Like It* for Creation Theatre Company; *Outside Edge* at the New Vic; *Harvest* at Southwark Playhouse; *Romeo and Juliet* and *King Lear* at the Orange Tree. **TV** includes *Suspect* (season two), *High Hoops*, *Kidnapped: The Chloe Ayling Story*, *Supacell*, *FBI: International*, *Chloe*, *Sex Education* (season three), *This England*, *Coronation Street*, *Hollyoaks*, *Holby City*, *Empathy*, *Where the Heart Is*, *Footballers' Wives*, *Oscar Charlie*, *Other People's Children*, *Second Sight*, *A Viking in My Bed*, *Hope and Glory*, *Lucy Sullivan Is Getting Married*, *Casualty*, *The Bill*, *Band of Gold* and *Anna Lee*. **Films** include *Blueberry Inn*, *Death on the Nile*, *The Pilgrim Factor* and *The Journey*.

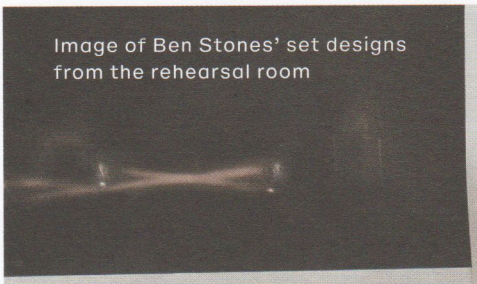
Tessa Wong

Horatio

Tessa Wong trained at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, where she received the 2021 New Earth Theatre's Constellation Creatives Bursary. Her work in **theatre** includes *Cyrano* at the Traverse and Park Theatre. **TV** includes *The Capture* (seasons two and three), *Black Mirror: Hotel Reverie*, *Silent Witness* (season 27), *Smothered*, *Black Mirror: Joan is Awful*, and *Midsomer Murders*.

Seb Slade

Image of Ben Stones' set designs from the rehearsal room



ACT 1 SCENE 1 Cont

He finds the other palace guards.

ACT 1 SCENE 2

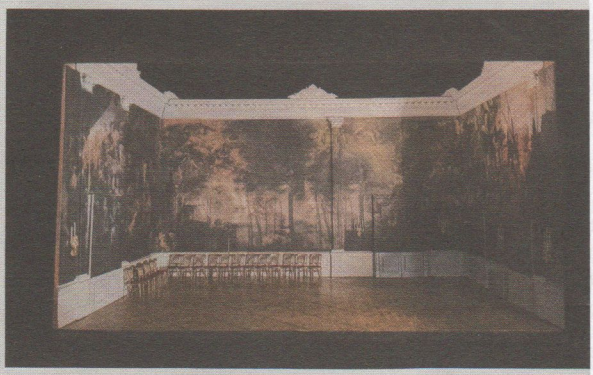
THE GREAT HALL A grand wedding banquet for the King and Queen of Denmark. Gertrude and King Claudius, who are recently married, ask Hamlet to stay in Denmark a while longer. Horatio tells Hamlet about the ghost. **STAGING NOTE** Claudius gestures to an empty chair at the table and lays the dead King Hamlet's sash upon it. Hamlet gets up from the main table and sits STILL in a vacant seat. The whole palace is alive with various parties going on outside the hall.

ACT 1 SCENE 5

ALL Hamlet asks the others to leave. The Ghost wanders around the wedding feast where he walks amongst and sits at the head table where his ex-wife and brother had sat. **STAGING NOTE** The Ghost leaves the weapon that Hamlet will use later in the play.

ACT 1 SCENE 5 Cont

STAGING NOTE Chairs move violently as if the Ghost is charging through the room.

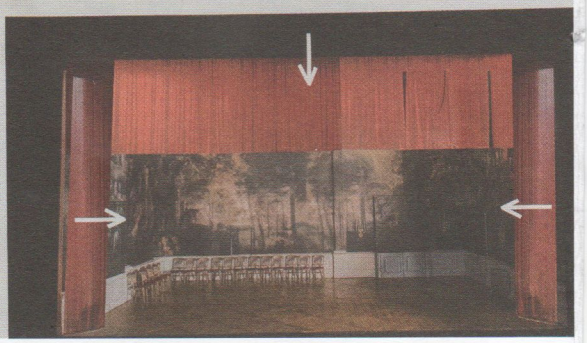


ACT 2 SCENE 1

THE GREAT HALL Polonius directs the house servants in the clearing of the wedding party. **STAGING NOTE** The scene change must be complete by Polonius and Ophelias Scene together.

ACT 2 SCENE 2

THE GREAT HALL The room is cleared and restored to The Great Hall. All the doors are in use as people come and go throughout the scene. Claudius and Gertrude try to determine the cause or Hamlet's strange behavior, summoning help from two of his old friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. A troupe of actors arrive. Hamlet plans to use the troupe to test Claudius. "Denmarks a prison"

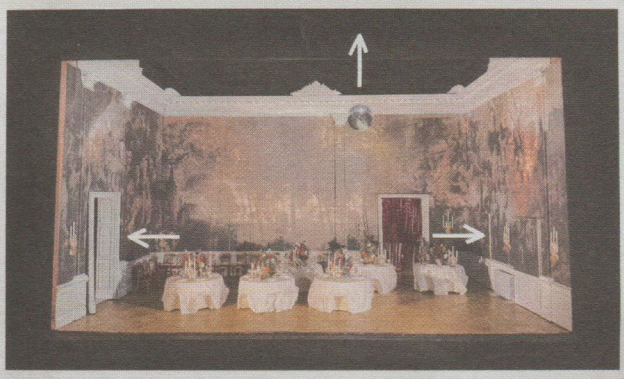


ACT 1 SCENE 3

THE GREAT HALL The house of Polonius is located on a wedding table OSR. Laertes counsels his sister Ophelia not to fall in love with Hamlet, and their father Polonius agrees. Polonius advises Laertes on how to conduct himself at school.

ACT 1 SCENE 4

THE GREAT HALL Later that night. The guards and Hamlet see The Ghost again. Hamlet waits with H
"Something is rotten in the state of Denmark"

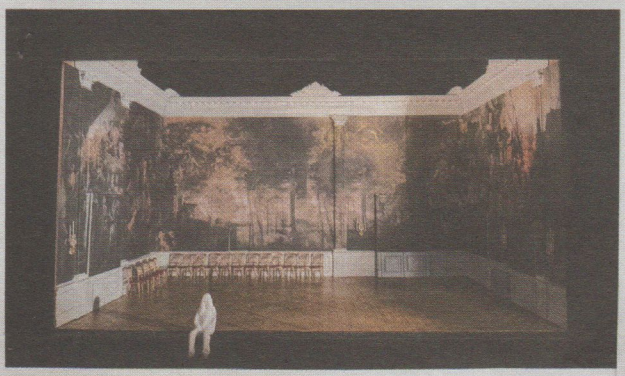


ACT 1 SCENE 5 to ACT 2 SCENE 1 Transition

THE GREAT HALL Polonius directs the house servants in the clearing of the wedding party.

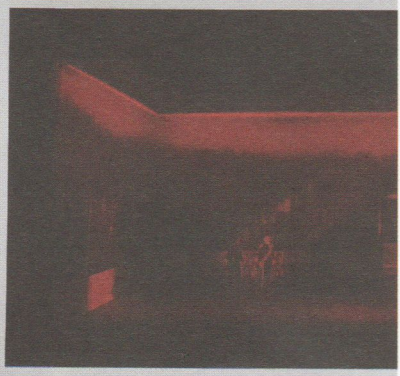
ACT 1 SCENE 5 to ACT 2 SCENE 1 Tra

THE GREAT HALL Polonius directs the house servants in the clearing of t



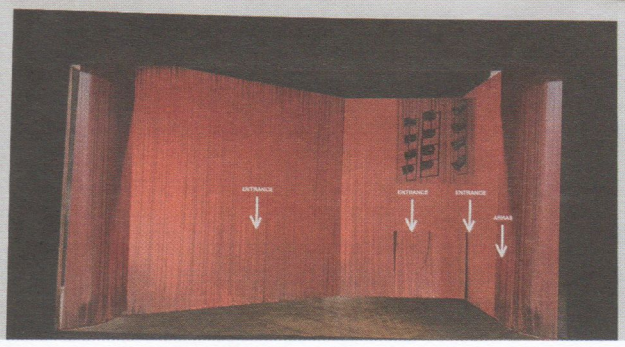
ACT 2 SCENE 2 Cont

STAGING NOTE Hamlet may sit on the edge of the stage to break the 4th wall.



ACT 2 SCENE 2 Cont

STAGING NOTE Fortinbras may enter to visualize the sub plot and this will need a bit of a new aesthetic style of
to be clear that it needs to be able to frame story telling of Fortinbras and his army. Over to



Ryan Ellsworth

Robert Hastie

Director

Robert Hastie is Deputy Artistic Director at the National Theatre. His work in theatre includes *Standing at the Sky's Edge* at Sheffield Crucible, the National Theatre and in the West End (Olivier Award for Best New Musical); *Chariots of Fire*, *Miss Saigon*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (co-produced with Ramps on the Moon), *ROCK / PAPER / SCISSORS*, *She Loves Me*, *The Band Plays On*, *Coriolanus*, *Guys and Dolls*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The York Realist* (co-produced with the Donmar), *The Wizard of Oz*, *Of Kith and Kin* (co-produced with the Bush) and *Julius Caesar* at Sheffield Theatres; *Macbeth* at Shakespeare's Globe; *Breaking the Code* at the Royal Exchange, Manchester; *Henry V* at Regent's Park; *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* at Theatr Clwyd; *My Night with Reg* (also in the West End) and *Splendour* at the Donmar; *Carthage* and *Events While Guarding the Bofors Gun* at the Finborough; *Sixty-Six Books* at the Bush; *A Breakfast of Eels* at the Print Room; and *Operation Mincemeat* in the West End and on Broadway (Olivier Award for Best New Musical). TV includes *Sex Education*. Previously, Robert Hastie was Artistic Director of Sheffield Theatres and Associate Director at Donmar Warehouse.

Ben Stones

Set and Costume Designer

Ben Stones is an Olivier Award-nominated stage designer. He trained at Central Saint Martins College of Art. Work in theatre includes *Standing at the Sky's Edge* at the National Theatre, Sheffield Theatres and in the West End (Olivier nomination for Best Set Design); *Sylvia* at the Old Vic; *Julius Caesar*, *Coriolanus*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Miss Saigon*, *Rock*, *Frost/*

Nixon, *She Loves Me*, *The Band Plays On* and *KES Reimagined* for Sheffield Theatres; *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* at Leeds Playhouse and HOME Manchester; *Happy Meal* at the Traverse; *The Watsons* (also the Menier Chocolate Factory) and *Way Upstream* at Chichester; *Passing Strange* and *The Bear/The Proposal* at the Young Vic; *Swive* at Sam Wanamaker Playhouse; *HIR* at the Bush; *Frankenstein*, *Breaking the Code*, *Doctor Faustus*, *A Taste of Honey* and *The Producers* at the Royal Exchange, Manchester; *Good with People* for Paines Plough and at 59E59, New York; *The Dazzle*, *Bug* and *Fool for Love* for Found111; *Hobson's Choice* at Regent's Park; *Creditors* at the Donmar and Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York; and *Operation Mincemeat* in the West End and on Broadway. Dance includes *Mixtape: Celebrating 20 years of ZooNation The Kate Prince Company*; *Message in a Bottle* for Universal Music and Sadler's Wells; *Some Like It Hip Hop* for Sadler's Wells and on UK tour; *The Mad Hatter's Tea Party* at the ROH and the Roundhouse. Opera includes *The Merry Widow* for ENO. **benstones.com**
benstones

Jessica Hung Han Yun

Lighting Designer

Jessica Hung Han Yun's work in theatre includes *The Estate* and *Dick Whittington* at the National Theatre; *Hamlet Hail to the Thief* (also Factory International) and *The Mirror and the Light* for the RSC; *My Neighbour Totoro* at the Barbican (Olivier and WhatsOnStage Awards); *Bridgadoon*, *Once on This Island* and *The Enormous Crocodile* at Regent's Park; *Equus* at Stratford East and on tour with ETT and Theatre Royal Stratford (Knight of Illumination and Offie Awards, Broadway World UK and WhatsOnStage

Noel White

Awards nominations); *Blindness* and *Marys Seacole* at the Donmar; *Alma Mater* at the Almeida; *Fangirls* at the Lyric Hammersmith; *Wild Rose* at Edinburgh Royal Lyceum; *The Good Person of Szechwan* for Sheffield Crucible, ETT and Lyric Hammersmith; *Baghdaddy*, *The Glow*, *seven methods of killing kylie jenner* and *Pah-La* at the Royal Court; *Fairview* at the Young Vic; *The Human Voice* and *Dear Elizabeth* at the Gate, London; *Straight Line Crazy* at the Bridge; *Speed* at the Bush; *Snowflake* at Kiln; *Cuckoo* at Soho Theatre; *Nine Foot Nine* on tour (Offie Award); and *Dr Strangelove*, *Anna X* and *Lyonesse* in the West End. Other projects include *DIVA*, an exhibition for the V&A and the *Museum of Home* art installation. **jessicahhy.com**

Alexandra Faye Braithwaite

Sound Designer

Alexandra Faye Braithwaite's work in theatre includes *Underdog: The Other Other Brontë* at the National Theatre and Northern Stage; *Falkland Sound* for the RSC; *Punch* at the Young Vic, Nottingham Playhouse, the Apollo and Manhattan Theatre Club; *Christmas Carol Goes Wrong*, *Good Luck, Studio!* and *GROAN UPS* for Mischief; *Choir*, *Never Have I Ever* and *The Narcissist* at Chichester; *Giant* (also Harold Pinter), *Sound of the Underground* and *Purple Snowflakes and Titty Wanks* (also Abbey, Dublin) at the Royal Court; *Liberation*, *A Taste of Honey*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Bloody Elle* (also West End), *Wuthering Heights* and *Light Falls* at the Royal Exchange, Manchester; *A Streetcar Named Desire*,

Robert Hastie

Tessa Wong

Chariots of Fire, *The Good Person of Szechwan* (also Lyric Hammersmith) and *Anna Karenina* at Sheffield Crucible; *The Creakers* at Theatre Royal Plymouth and Southbank Centre; *Abigail's Party*, *How Not to Drown*, *The Wonderful World of Dissocia* and *Shining City* at Stratford East; *The Real Thing* at the Old Vic; *Work It Out* and *Endurance* at HOME Manchester; *Lost and Found* at Factory International; *Uncanny: I Know What I Saw* on UK tour; *A Pretty Shitty Love*, *Once Upon a Christmas* and *A Christmas Carol* at Theatr Clwyd; *Hamlet* at Leeds Playhouse; and *Cougar*, *Dealing with Clair* and *The Rolling Stone* at the Orange Tree.

Richard Taylor

Composer

Richard Taylor has composed scores for almost 100 plays around the UK and in the West End. His work in theatre includes, as composer and lyricist, *Flowers for Mrs Harris* at Sheffield Crucible, Chichester and Riverside Studios (2024 WhatsOnStage Award and 2016 UK Theatre Award for Best Musical); *The Go-Between* at West Yorkshire Playhouse, Northampton, Derby and the Apollo (2012 UK Theatre Award for Best Musical); *Beauty and the Beast* at Chichester; *The Jonah Boy* at Stephen Joseph; and the original stage version of *Whistle Down the Wind* at Sadler's Wells and Riverside Studios; as composer, *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Afterplay*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Sheffield Mysteries* at Sheffield Crucible; *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*, *Yerma*, *Electricity*, *Medea*, *Single Spies*, *Spring and Port Wine*, *Enjoy*, *David Copperfield*, *When We Are Married*, *Pinocchio*, *A Doll's House* and *Hedda Gabler* at West Yorkshire Playhouse; and *Great Expectations*, *Humble Boy*, *Tom's Midnight Garden*, *The BFG*, *Frozen* and *The Borrowers* at the Manchester Library Theatre. Opera compositions include *The Moon is Listening* for Garsington Opera and Grange Festival (2024 YAMaward); *Calderland* for 509 Arts (2018 Royal Philharmonic Society Award); *Ludd and Isis* for the Royal Opera; *Services No Longer Required* at the Imperial War Museum North; and *Confucius Says* at Hackney Empire (2012 Royal Philharmonic Society Award). Other work includes *The Man Who Planted Trees* for the BBC Philharmonic; and *Genesis* for ENO at London Coliseum. TV includes *Father*

Sophia Papadopoulos, Liz Jadav, Siobhan Redmond and Ryan Ellsworth

Christmas and the Missing Reindeer and *The Brides in the Bath*.

Ira Mandela Siobhan

Movement Director

Ira Mandela Siobhan's work in theatre includes, as movement director/ choreographer, *The Grapes of Wrath* at the National Theatre; *Roald Dahl's The BFG* for the RSC; *Born with Teeth* at Wyndham's; *Manic Street Creature* and *Strike* at Southwark Playhouse; *The Gang of Three* at the King's Head; and *Addictive Beat* for Boundless Theatre; as associate movement director, *Mlima's Tale* at Kiln (also as performer in the title role); and as performer, *My Brilliant Friend*, *Mosquitoes*, *Everyman* and *Fela!* at the National Theatre; *Othello* and *Imogen* at Shakespeare's Globe; *Equus* at Trafalgar; *The Wind in the Willows* in the West End; *Robin Hood: The Legend. Re-written* and *Running Wild* at Regent's Park; *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* at Leeds Playhouse; *My Brilliant Friend* at the Rose, Kingston; *The Drowned Man* for Punchdrunk; *Macbeth*, *A Season in the Congo* and *Feast* at the Young Vic; and *To Be Straight with You* and *Can We Talk About This?* for DV8. TV includes *The Crown*, *History of a Pleasure Seeker*, *The Third Day: Autumn* and *Brave New World*. Films include *Barbie*, *Mission: Impossible – Dead Reckoning Part One*, *London Road*, *Pan*, *Desert Dancer* and *To Be Straight with You*.

Kate Waters

Fight Director

Kate Waters' recent work in theatre includes *Bacchae*, *Alterations*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Father and the Assassin*, *The Effect*, *Small Island*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Frankenstein*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *War Horse*, *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Women Beware Women* for the National Theatre; *Hamnet* (also West End), *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet* and *Two Noble Kinsmen* for the RSC; *Evita*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *The Maids*, *The Pride*, *The Hothouse*, *The Ruling Class* and *East is East* for Jamie

Lloyd Theatre Co.; *Rigoletto* at Welsh National Opera; *Macbeth* at Wessex Grove; *Twelfth Night* at @sohoplace; *Portia Coughlan*, *King Lear*, *The Secret Life of Bees* and *The Tragedy of Macbeth* at the Almeida; *Lord of the Flies* at Leeds Playhouse; *Private Lives*, *Clyde's*, *Henry V* and *Sweat* (also Gielgud) at the Donmar; *Julius Caesar* and *Henry IV* at the Donmar, King's Cross Theatre and St Ann's Warehouse, Brooklyn; *Peter Pan* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Regent's Park; *Richard III*, *Guys and Dolls*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Julius Caesar* at the Bridge; *The Other Boleyn Girl* and *Sing Yer Heart Out for the Lads* at Chichester; and *The Hills of California* (also Broadway) and *Tina – The Tina Turner Musical* in the West End. TV includes *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale*, *EastEnders* and *Kisses and Bumflicks*. Films include *My Policeman*, *Death of England*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Pond Life* and *Making Noises Quietly*.

Shereen Ibrahim

Voice Coach

Shereen Ibrahim trained as an actor at RADA and as a voice and dialect coach at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Her company voice work includes *Inter Alia*, *The Estate*, *Dear England* (2023 and 2025), *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Coriolanus*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Underdog: The Other Other Brontë*, *Dear Octopus*, *Dixon and Daughters*, *The Odyssey*, *Hamlet*, *The Crucible*, *Jack Absolute Flies Again* and *The Father and the Assassin* (also dialect work) for the National Theatre; *Hir* at Park Theatre (also dialect work); and *Mom, How Did You Meet the Beatles?* (also dialect work) and *The Jungle Book* at Chichester. Dialect work includes *Standing at the Sky's Edge*, *All of Us* and *Our Generation* for the National Theatre; *The Wolf, the Duck and the Mouse* at the Unicorn; and *Richard III* for Liverpool

Tom Glenister

Playhouse and the Rose, Kingston. Acting work includes *The Black Album* and *The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each Other* at the National Theatre; *Temple* at the Donmar; and *Fireworks* at the Royal Court. TV includes, as actor, *Malpractice*, *Patience*, *Conversations with Friends*, *The Feed* and *The Salisbury Poisonings*, and as dialect coach, *Sisters*.

Georgie Staight

Associate Director

Georgie Staight trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. Her work in theatre includes, as director, *One Man Musical by Flo & Joan* at Edinburgh Fringe, Soho Theatre and Melbourne Comedy Festival; *Instructions for a Teenage Armageddon* at Southwark Playhouse and Garrick (four Offie Award nominations); *The Wizard of Oz*, *Camp Albion*, *A Christmas Carol* and *D-Day 75* at the Watermill, Newbury; *Queen Mab* for the Actors' Church; *Eigengrau* at Waterloo East; *CHUTNEY* at the Bunker (four Offie Award nominations); *Into the Numbers* and *Dubailand* at Finborough; and *Dreamless Sleep* at Arts; as associate director, *Dawn French is a Huge Tw*t* at London Palladium and on UK tour; and *Operation Mincemeat* in the West End and on Broadway; and as assistant director, *Sweet Charity* and *Our Town* at the Watermill, Newbury; and *Legally Blonde: The Musical* at Bernie Grant Arts Centre. Georgie Staight is an Associate Artist at the Watermill Theatre.

georgiestaight.com

Ayesha Dharker

Hiran Abeysekera, Kate Waters and Tom Glenister

Joe Bolland and Hari Mackinnon

Hiran Abeysekera and members of the company

Production credits
Thanks to the Young Vic, Johnny Mann Scenic Services Ltd, JD McDougall and Dr Sophie Duncan

Production Placement, Props:
Zara Creighton

The position of Deputy Artistic Director at the National Theatre is supported by James and Victoria Corcoran

This production is supported by James and Victoria Corcoran, Bagri Foundation, Marcia B. Whitaker and The Polonsky Foundation

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FINANCIAL TIMES

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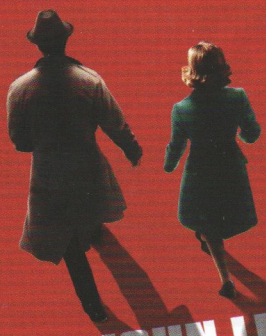

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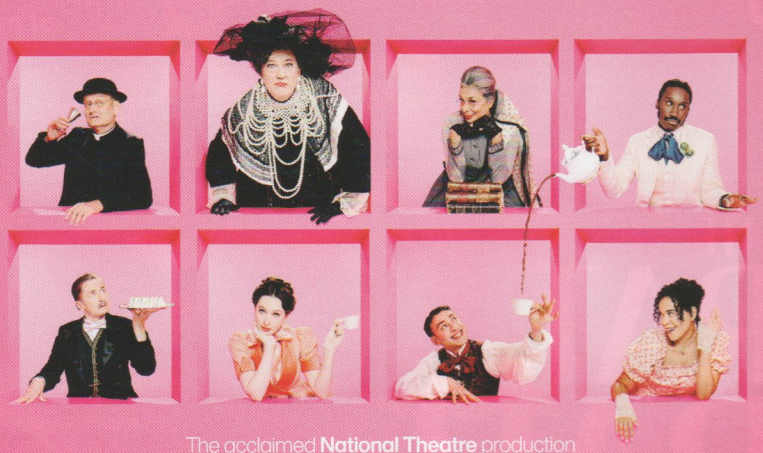

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The Dorfman theatre. Image: Philip Vile

In the auditorium

To help everyone enjoy the performance, we ask you to follow these guidelines:

Please do not use your mobile phone during the performance. Even on silent, the light they emit can be very distracting to those around you.

If you want to capture your visit to the National Theatre with a selfie, please do so *before* or *after* the show. Photography and filming are not allowed during the performance.

Please note that glass is not allowed inside the auditorium. Members of staff will be able to help you transfer your drink into a plastic cup before entering.

Hot drinks cannot be taken into the auditorium. Be careful if you get a hot drink during the interval, as you'll need to finish it quickly!

Please be aware that hot food is not allowed inside the auditorium. Your food may smell amazing to you, but not necessarily to the rest of the audience or to the performers.

Please take security seriously and do not leave bags and coats unattended. There is a free cloakroom in the foyer if you do not wish to carry them with you during the interval.

Please do not stand or sit in the aisles during the performance.

Please be considerate of those around you and try not to make too much noise, especially during quiet parts of the performance when even a rustling crisp packet or a whispered comment can ruin the atmosphere.

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Jody Robinson *(Deputy)*
Ben Allen
Nell Allen
Patricia Andreucci
Ellis Bloom
Ben Carmichael
Suresh Chawla
Joanne Colley
Aimee Donnellan
Adam Fretwell
James Goodsall
Alistair Gribben
Lee Harrington
David Helyar *(Automation Control Mgr)*
Phil Horsburgh
Shane Hover
Josh Jackson
Francis Johnson
Djordje Jovanovic
Leon King
David Malaley
Emma Moore
Danny O'Neill
Pradip Pankhania
Barry Peavot
Noah Phelps-Johnson
Simon Pink
Jamie Powell
Yuri Queiroz
Ayla Richardson *(Apprentice)*
Olivia Richardson
Carl Rook
Liam Roughley
Thomas Russell
Abdoulie Saidy
Ken Savva
Cole Scott *(Apprentice)*
Mateusz Slonowski
Cassie Smith
Daniel Thompson
Gary Tolhurst
Dave Tuff
Dan Turner
Duncan Weir
Morna Weir
Stage Engineering
Michael Lane *(Head)*
Darren Middleditch
Bryn Oram
Production & Technical Administration & Coordination
Fiona Oram *(Admin Mgr)*
Suzanne Diakun *(Sound & Video)*
Susanna Keeley *(Stage)*
Alyce Potter *(Lighting)*
Steph Richardson *(Workshops)*
Hannah Sadler *(Costume Production, Running Wardrobe & WH&M)*
Lucy Tory *(Head of Production & Technical Projects)*
Wigs, Hair & Make-up
Mel Bouvet *(Acting Head)*
Kim Kasim *(Acting Head)*
Vivien Bartlett
Christabel Blackwood
Adele Brandman
Kelly Carpenter
Philip Carson-Sheard
Daniele Clifton
Catherine Gibbons
Suzanne Harger
Leanne Lashbrook
Matilde Mendez
Aleksandra Olejnicka
Ella Parsons
Emily Rudaz
Suzanne Scotcher
Natalie Shephard
Helena Smythe
Laura Taibi
Marina Wells
Emerald Yun

VOICE
Cathleen McCarron *(Head)*
Shereen Ibrahim
Zoe Littleton

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Gina Napoli *(Chief Operating Officer)*
Madalyn Ann Chase
Macy Lanceta
Reese Leif
Anna-Fleur Rawlinson
Kirsten Sunderland
Eamonn Wright
Matthew Wright

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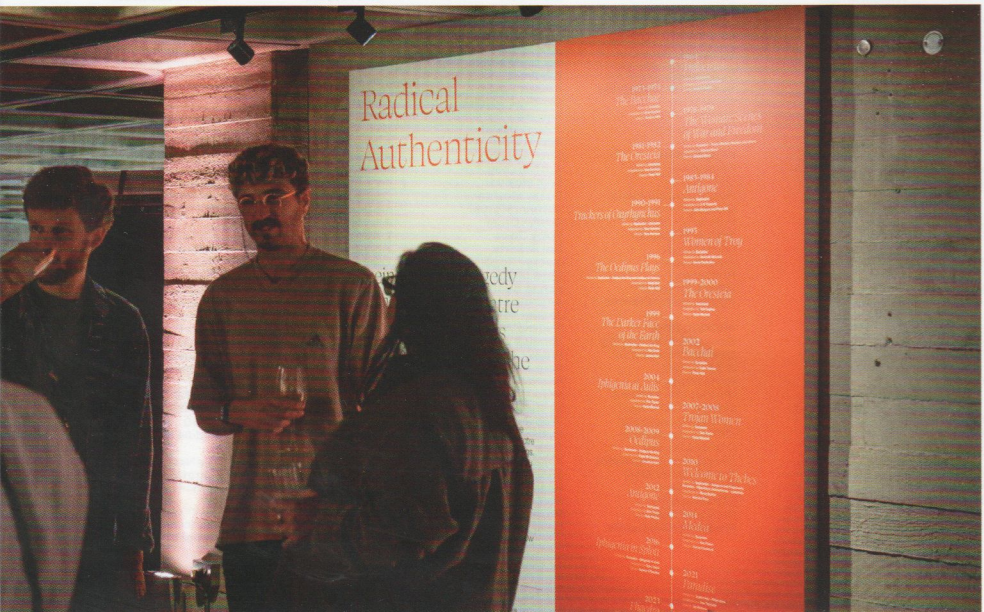
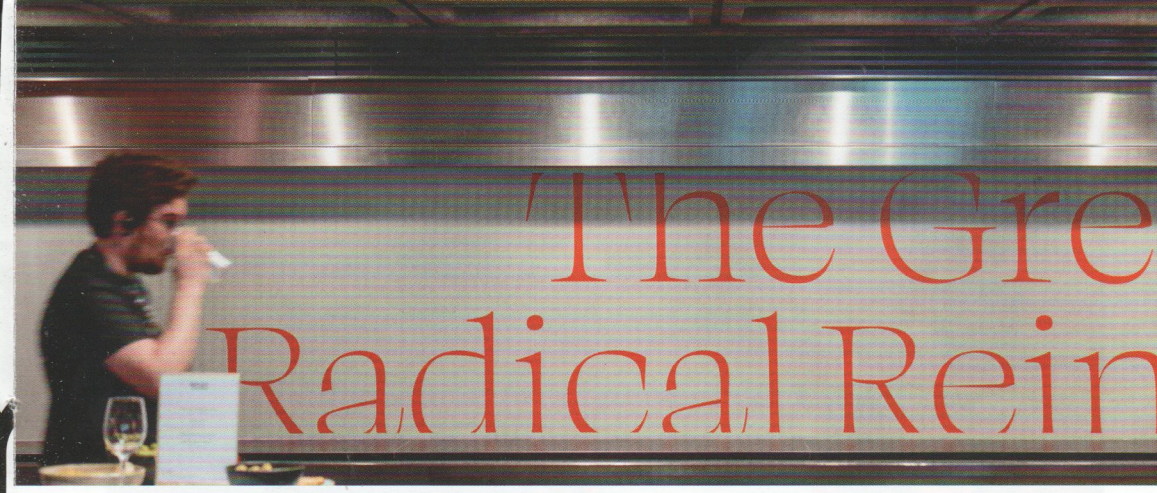
Exhibition curator,
Dr Lucy Jackson

The Greeks:

The opening of the new exhibition on Greek theatre at the National Theatre





Photographs by
Cameron Slater Photography

Radical Reinvention

Guests engage with exhibition content, including audio and video.

EXPLORE: FREE EXHIBITION

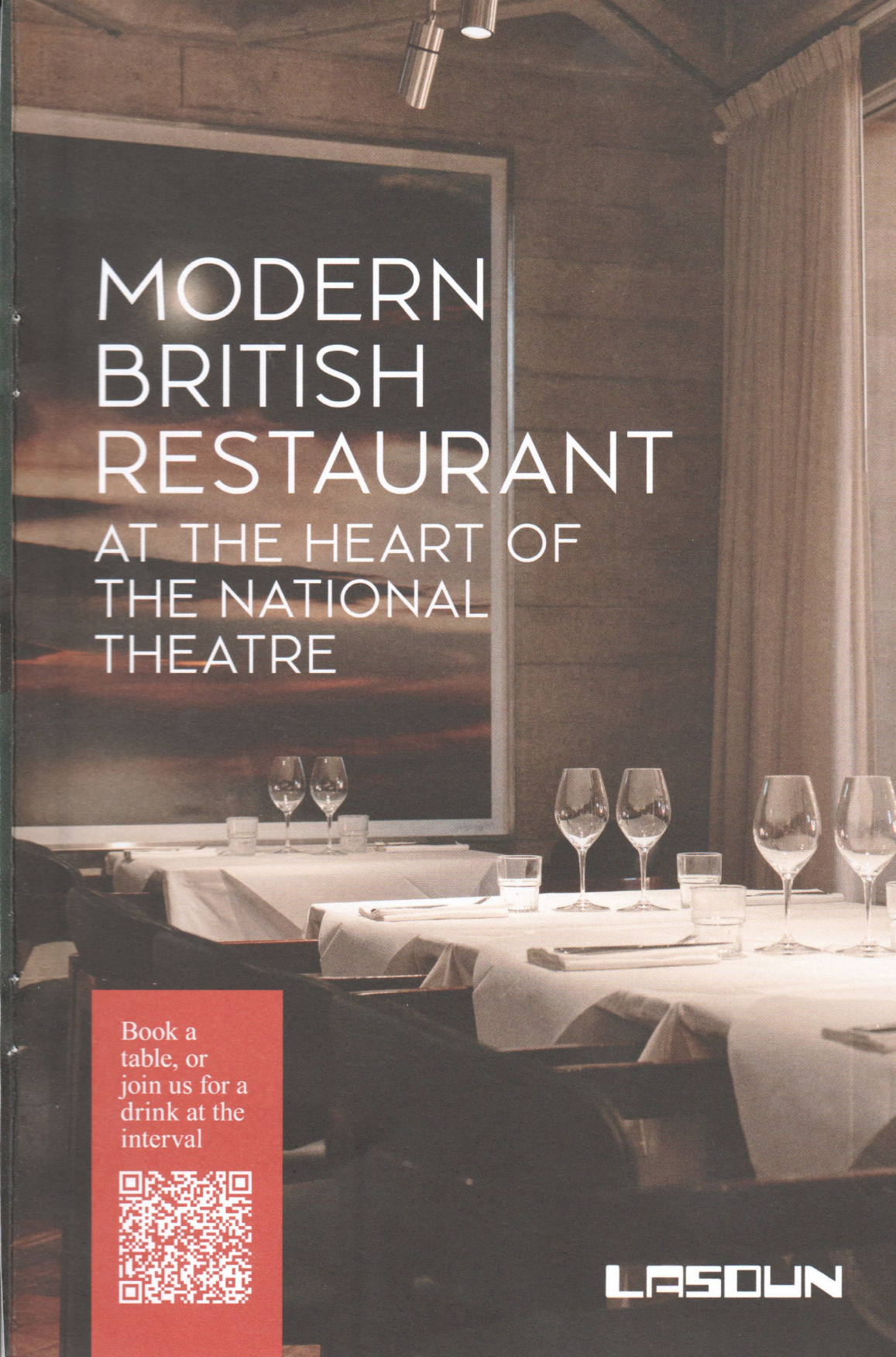
A free exhibition in the National Theatre's Wolfson Gallery, open until February 2026.

The ancient Greeks were constantly reinventing their myths for new audiences.

In this exhibition, we explore how artists at the National Theatre have continued this tradition of radical reinvention and focus on four essential aspects of ancient Greek drama – sound, space, dance and community.

Using items in the National Theatre Archive, we show how creative you can be with Greek tragedy when you reimagine it for the modern stage.

Curated by Lucy Jackson (Durham University) in collaboration with Erin Lee, Head of Archive at the National Theatre, and generously supported by Durham University.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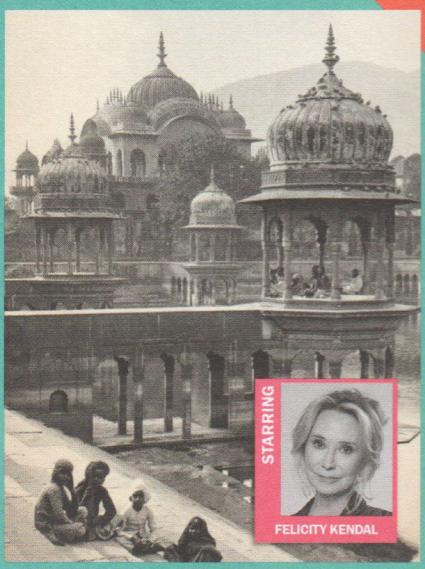
BY **RICHARD GREENBERG**
DIRECTED BY **BLANCHE McINTYRE**
17 OCT - 22 NOV 2025



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